A MANUAL

ON THE

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BY JOHN HOLMES AGNEW.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY THE

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

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In our inquiries concerning the Christian Sabbath, few things are more interesting or instructive than its *history*. The judicious and worthy author of the following excellent Lectures, has expressed an opinion that the consecration of one day in seven to rest from bodily labor, and to the service of God, may be traced back very distinctly to the close of the work of creation. The reasons which he offers in support of this opinion will not here be repeated. They will probably be deemed sufficiently solid by most readers. From the moment there was a man upon the earth, it seems to have been the will of God that a seventh part of time should be consecrated to his service. It is quite certain that much, very much, is made of the Sabbath throughout the whole of the Old Testament, and, especially, that the Prophets, in all their reflections on the melancholy past, and in all their anticipations of the portentous future,

represent the sanctification of the Sabbath as lying at the foundation of all temporal as well as spiritual prosperity, and the neglect of this divine institution as most certainly drawing down the destroying judgments of God on those who indulged it. This feature of the prophetic parts of the Old Testament, is too prominent to escape the notice of any intelligent reader. The Prophets dwell much more on moral than ceremonial observances; and denounce the terrors of the Almighty much more frequently and solemnly against delinquencies with regard to the former than the latter. Yet who that has read their thrilling pages has failed to observe that the desecration of the Sabbath is the object of their constant and most emphatic proclamations of Divine wrath; and represented as that great and radical sin, which, more than most others, is adapted to undermine religious character, and to destroy nations? In fact, there is no sin, unless, perhaps, it may be that of *idolatry*, which is more heavily censured, or more awfully threatened, throughout their writings, than the breach of the Sabbath. Surely, such language as the following ought to make a deep impression upon every reflecting mind: *Blessed is the man that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it. Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and*

make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath day, then will I kindle a fire in your gates, and it shall devour your palaces, and it shall not be quenched. Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, and that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them. Yet they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my Sabbaths. As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and will bring you into the bond of the covenant. Thus saith the Lord, because they have forgotten me, and cast me behind their back, and defiled my sanctuary, and profaned my Sabbaths— Behold, I will bring up a company upon them, and will give them to be removed and spoiled. Thus saith the Lord, because they have profaned my holy things; because they have put no difference between the holy and the profane, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them; therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon

them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath; their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the Holy of the Lord, Honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

None, it is presumed, will be surprised at this language, who consider the consecration of one day in seven to the service of God, not as a mere *ritual observance*, but as an undoubted duty of MORAL AND PERPETUAL OBLIGATION. That this is the case with the Holy Sabbath, as laid down in the *fourth commandment*, is well established by our Author in the second Lecture in the following series. It has been sometimes said, that the fourth commandment, though it holds a place among other commands, all of which are allowed to be of universal and perpetual obligation, cannot now be considered as in force, because it enjoins the observance of the *seventh* day of the week, which is now generally acknow

ledged, among Christians, not to be the Christian Sabbath. This inference, however, can by no means be admitted. The commandment in question cannot be considered as fixing the precise day, in order, which ought to be observed; but only as requiring that, after six days of labor, the seventh should be a day of rest, and be kept holy. Strictly speaking, then, in this sense, the Christian Sabbath is as much the seventh day as the Jewish Sabbath was; that is, it is as much the seventh part of the week, and succeeds to six days of labor as really as the Hebrew Sabbath did. The fourth commandment, then, far from being repealed or altered, is as much in force as ever, and applies as perfectly to the New Testament Sabbath as to that of the Ceremonial economy; and, of course, ought to be regarded as establishing the moral and perpetual obligation to devote one day in seven to the service of God, just as indubitably as other parts of the same code render obligatory at this hour, and will for ever render obligatory, abstinence from idolatry, venerating Jehovah's name, honoring parents, or speaking the truth to our neighbors.

With regard to the *change* of the Sabbath, under the New Testament dispensation, from the *seventh* to the *first* day of the week, the enlightened Author

of the following Lectures has written so well, that further enlargement on the subject in this Introductory Essay is deemed unnecessary. It will be more to our purpose to take a cursory survey of the history of the ancient Church in regard to the observance of this important institution of our holy religion. Mr. AGNEW has most correctly stated that the "ancient Fathers of the first and second centuries" testify, that the early Church ever sanctified a weekly Sabbath, and carefully attended to those public and private observances which belonged to it as a day of holy rest. It may not be either uninteresting or useless to state a little more in detail the views and habits in reference to this subject, which the early records of the Church enable us to ascertain.

The younger PLINY, who was the contemporary and friend of the emperor TRAJAN, and for some time, during the reign of that emperor, governor of *Bithynia*, in giving an account to his master of the practices of the Christians in his day, states, that "their custom was to meet together early in the morning, before it was light, ON A STATED DAY, to sing a hymn to Christ as God, and bind themselves, *by a Sacrament*, to do no evil," &c. From this testimony, it is evident that the early Christians had

a *fixed* or *stated* day on which they convened to worship God. The testimony of IGNATIUS,* who suffered martyrdom early in the second century, is still more explicit. He exhorts the *Magnesians* "no longer to observe *Sabbaths*, (i. e. the Jewish Sabbaths,) but to keep the *Lord's-day*, on which our Life was raised from the dead." CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS also speaks of the day under the same title, as a day the observance of which was incumbent on Christians. DIONYSIUS, bishop of *Corinth*, who lived toward the latter part of the second century, is quoted by EUSEBIUS as stating the fact, that the Christians in his time "observed the Lord's-day as a holy day." MELITO, bishop of *Sardis*, who lived about the same time, is also represented by the same historian as having written a book "concerning the Lord's-day." IRENÆUS, toward the close of the same century, in writing to VICTOR, bishop of *Rome*, says "The mystery of

* It is known to all well-informed readers, that the genuineness of the Epistles of IGNATIUS has been deeply questioned by the most learned divines and ecclesiastical historians who have written for the last two hundred and fifty years. The evidence of interpolation in reference to *one subject*, is so abundant, that the writer of these pages would never think for a moment of quoting him as a witness *on that subject*. In reference to *other subjects*, however, he would quote him freely and without scruple. This is also known to be the opinion of some candid friends of prelacy.

the Lord's resurrection ought to be celebrated only on the Lord's-day." ORIGEN also calls the first day of the week "the Lord's-day," and distinguishes it from the Jewish Sabbath, to which he says, unequivocally, it ought to be preferred.

But when the early Christians had occasion to peak to the *Pagans* concerning this sacred day, hey commonly called it *Sunday*, the title by which it was most familiarly known to the mass of the heathen population. Thus, JUSTIN MARTYR, in his *Apology*, addressed to the Emperor, says, "We all meet together on *Sunday*, on which God, having changed darkness and matter, created the world, and on this day Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead." Thus, also, his contemporary, TERTULLIAN, in reply to the accusation of the heathen, that the Christians worshipped the Sun, says, "We do, indeed, make Sunday a day of joy, but for other reasons than that of worship to the sun, which is no part of our religion." At other times, when the same father is speaking to his fellow Christians, he commonly uses the title of "the Lord's-day;" more especially when it is his purpose to distinguish it from the Jewish Sabbath. In like manner, the first Christian emperors use the names "Sunday" and "Lord's-day" alternately, according as it was their

purpose to address Pagans or Christians. Of this we have a remarkable specimen in the language of VALENTINIAN the younger, when he says, "On Sunday, which our forefathers very properly called 'the Lord's-day.'" In short, it is perfectly eviden from the earliest and most authentic records, tha the first day of the week, from the time of the Apostles, was statedly observed by the Christian Church; that the favorite title by which they spoke of it, was "the Lord's-day;" and that when they called it "Sunday," it was in accommodation to the popular usage of the Pagans around them, who, in adopting the measure of time by weeks, and in giving names to the days of the week, gave the name of "the day of the sun" (*dies solis*) to the first.* This day was also sometimes called, by the early Christians, "the day of bread," (*dies panis*,) because the "breaking of bread," as a memorial of Christ, or, in other words, administering the Lord's supper, in many churches, made a part of the stated service of every Lord's-day.

As to the *manner* in which the early Christians sanctified the Lord's-day, it may not be uninteresting to state a few particulars. And here it must be borne in mind that the Christians, during the apos

* BINGHAM'S *Origines Ecclesiasticæ*. B. xx. c. ii. 1, 2.

tolic age, and for more than two centuries after wards, were severely and constantly persecuted. During a large portion of this time, they were not permitted openly to assemble in peace for the public worship of God; but were often obliged to come ogether by a kind of stealth; before day, or after ight-fall. This is evident from the account given y PLINY, before alluded to, who states that the Christians were accustomed to meet before it was light, on this day, and sing their morning hymns to Christ. In like manner, TERTULLIAN, in answer to one who asked how they should celebrate the solemnities of the Lord's-day, when exposed to the violence of the Pagan soldiery, replied, that they should do it as the Apostles did, by faith, and not by bribing them; for if faith could remove mountains, it could much more easily remove a soldier out of the way. But that, if they could not meet by day, they had the night sufficiently clear, with the light of Christ, to protect them. The same author tells the heathen, who had maliciously charged them with murdering and devouring an infant in their assemblies, that they were often beset, often betrayed, nay, daily seized in their religious assemblies. But yet that no one ever found them acting such a tragedy; no one ever gave evidence

of their being such Cyclops and Syrens before a judge. Nay, they were sometimes barbarously murdered in their assemblies, the laws forbidding them to meet, and the government refusing to license their places of worship, charging them with being unlawful cabals, where they met only to plot treason and rebellion against the rulers. Under this pretence, as LACTANTIUS and EUSEBIUS both tell us, one of the heathen magistrates burnt a whole city, in *Phrygia*, together with the house in which many of the inhabitants were assembled to worship God. The imperial laws forbidding them to meet for religious worship, are distinctly mentioned by PLINY, as well as by several Christian writers. So that it is evident, that in those days of persecution, the Christians could not meet for the purpose of public worship but at the hazard of their lives.*

Still they did not think this a sufficient reason for "forsaking the assembling of themselves together." In spite of all the opposition and danger which they had to encounter, they met continually, every Lord's-day, to solemnize the appointed services. Of the manner in which they sanctified the day, the learned BINGHAM makes the following statement.

* BINGHAM'S *Origines Ecclesiasticæ*. B. xx.

"They not only rested from bodily labor, and secular business, but spent the day in such employments as were proper to set forth the glory of the Lord, to whose honor the day was devoted. That is, in holding religious assemblies, for the celebration of the several parts of divine service, as psalmody, reading of the scriptures, preaching, praying, and receiving the communion—all which were the constant service of this day. And such was the flaming zeal of those pious votaries, that nothing but sickness, or a great necessity, or imprisonment, or banishment, could detain them from it; and then, also, care was taken that the chief part of it, the communion, was administered to them by the hands of the Deacons, who carried it to those who were sick or in prison, that, as far as possible, they might still communicate with the public congregation." This is plain from the account which JUSTIN MARTYR gives of their worship: "On the day called Sunday, all that live in city or country meet together, and the writings of the Apostles and Prophets are read to them, after which the bishop or president of the assembly makes a discourse to the people, exhorting them to follow the good things they have heard; then we all rise up together, and offer prayers; and when prayers are ended, bread

and wine and water are brought to the president, who prays and gives thanks, according to the best of his ability, over them, the people answering, Amen. After which, distribution is made of the elements to all who are present, and they are sent to the absent by the hands of the deacons." By this account it appears that all Christians joined, as far as was possible, in the public service of the Lord's-day, and particularly in receiving the communion, from which the absent were not exempt, if there was any possibility of receiving it.*

In the religious exercises of this day, among the early Christians, there were some peculiarities worthy of notice. They supposed that the first day of the week, as it is observed as a memorial of our Lord's resurrection, ought to be kept as a season of humble, grateful joy; and, therefore, that there was a kind of spiritual incongruity in *fasting* on that day. Of course, setting apart the Lord's-day as a *fast-day* was considered as a departure from the spirit and purpose of the day. TERTULLIAN says, they counted it a crime to fast on this day; and AMBROSE bears the same testimony. Another practice, founded on the same principle, and as rigidly inculcated and enforced, was, in all worship,

* *Origines Ecclesiasticæ.* xx. 2.

public and private, to *pray standing* on the Lord's day. On this day it was considered as unlawful to *kneel*. This posture was reserved for days of *fasting* and *humiliation*. The early Christians laid so much stress on this rule, and enforced it so rigidly, that we find no case of exception to the practice, but that of *penitents*, under ecclesiastical discipline, who were required to pray kneeling, even on this day of devout joy. The learned BINGHAM observes, that this practice was so fixed, general, and long continued, that he is unable to determine when the contrary practice of kneeling on the Lord's-day was introduced.

But attending on public worship with diligence, and, as it would seem, through a large portion of the hours of every Lord's-day, was by no means the whole of that sanctification of the day which the early Christians considered as incumbent upon them. They carefully abstained from all servile labor, except what became necessary in discharging works of necessity and mercy. And when the empire became Christian, and, of course, the authority fell into Christian hands, this abstinence from all worldly labor, and all secular employments, was enforced by the imperial laws. The scrupulosity of the Jews, indeed, in the observance of their Sab-

Sabbath, was not inculcated. It was allowed to labor in fighting, to preserve men's lives against an enemy; in toiling at the helm and oar, to escape the violence of a tempest; in travelling to Church, to attend on the service of God; in dressing food for sustaining life; in delivering man or beast, when in manifest danger of death; in a word, their law on the subject was, that every kind of work was to be abstained from that could be avoided, and the whole of the Lord's-day devoted to the service of God.

Upon the same principle, when the empire became Christian, all proceedings *at law* were forbidden and suspended; excepting such as were absolutely *necessary*, or involved the exercise of important *charity*—such as the regular appointment of *curators* and *guardians* for *orphans*; taking legal measures to guard against *injury or loss by fire*; or going through the forms necessary for the *manumission of slaves*. With respect to these, and a variety of similar things specified in their laws, when they could not be postponed without great injury to the cause of humanity, they were allowed to be attended to on the Christian Sabbath, so far as to obviate the evils which would otherwise be incurred.*

* Bingham, B. xx.

Public and popular *amusements* were also interdicted, among Christians, on the Lord's-day, from an early period; and when the empire became Christian, were prohibited by law, and under severe sanctions. No ludicrous sports, games, or recreations, however lawful at other times, were allowed on this day. The theatre, the horse-race, the circus, the diversion of hunting, the amusement of dancing, of luxurious feasting, and every kind of dissipating pleasure, were solemnly forbidden, and in many cases visited with heavy penalties. In short, the law of the Church forbade every occupation or amusement which was adapted in any measure to turn a day of spiritual and sacred rest, into a day of carnal indulgence.

In regard to the utility and importance of the Lord's-day, Mr. AGNEW has acquitted himself so well, that little need be added to his representation of the subject. It is probable, however, that if our author had prepared his Lectures for the press within the last three months, he would have taken some notice of a most interesting body of testimony recently presented to a Committee of the British House of Commons, appointed to deliberate and report on some further provision for securing the observance of the Sabbath. A mass of testimony

has seldom been presented to the public on any subject more adapted to instruct and impress than that of which I speak. Ecclesiastics, and secular men, of different professions, were called before the Committee, and interrogated as to their belief of the utility of the Sabbath; the mischiefs arising from its neglect; and their acquaintance with any facts which were adapted to manifest the value and the necessity of this great and inestimable Christian Institution. It was truly edifying and deeply impressive to find ministers of the Gospel, worldly men, eminent Physicians, as well as those who were distinguished in other walks of secular life, all concurring in the conclusion, not only that the consecration of one day in the week, as a day of sacred rest, is essential to the *moral* and *spiritual* interests of men, but that it is no less essential to their INTELLECTUAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING: that the *Physician* and the *Lawyer* as really need a day of *rest* in each week from the toils of their respective professions—to refresh and invigorate their minds as well as their bodies, and to prevent the mischiefs of exhaustion—as the moral man and the Christian need a sanctified Sabbath to benefit their souls, and prepare them for the joys of that

Eternal Sabbath which remains for the people of God.

Is it possible for a reflecting mind to resist the power of such testimony as this? Can even the atheist, who wishes well to the physical constitution of his species, and to the peace, order and strength of civil society, refuse any longer to yield to the light of testimony which indubitably establishes—if "all men are not liars"—that the weekly rest of the Sabbath cannot be dispensed with without deep injury to every individual and family in the community; without impairing the vigor both of our bodies and minds; without prematurely destroying the beasts which serve us; without laying the foundation of disease in every department of our nature: in short, without conferring a morbid character upon all the vitals of our temporal prosperity, to say nothing of that corruption of moral principle, that degradation of moral character, in a word, those countless forms, and that measureless amount, of moral evil to which it inevitably leads?

The truth is, it would seem that the great Governor of the world has not more deeply or indelibly impressed upon our whole nature the evidence that food and sleep and temperance are indispensable to the healthful exercise of our faculties, than that the

regular observance of the weekly Sabbath is essential to the security of all our best interests as intellectual, corporeal and moral beings; and that just in proportion as we disregard it, we draw down upon ourselves physical and moral injury. It is not necessary to our reception of this fact, that we are able to fathom all its *reasons*. It is enough that THE FACT be established, and by testimony which cannot be suspected of leaning to the side of what it has been convenient for some to stigmatize under the name of "puritanical strictness."

The subject of the following Lectures, then, is one which does not merely concern the Christian. It is a subject in which every father of a family who wishes to train up his children in the paths of honor and usefulness,—every good citizen, every patriot, every statesman, every friend to the best intellectual and physical culture of his species, ought to take a deep and cordial interest. He who contemns and disregards the Lord's-day, may think that he means well; may make high professions of his patriotism, and boast of his light and benevolence; but he is undoubtedly acting a part hostile to the best interests of the community. He is, undoubtedly, exerting a pestiferous influence, the mischief of which may extend further, and last

longer than the most zealous advocate for the sanctification of the day was ever able to unfold.

The practices of many decent worldly men in our community, who, though they make no profession of practical piety, yet claim to be cordial respecters of religion, and to be friendly to the Sabbath; and the habits of some inconsistent professors of religion, in regard to the observance of this sacred day; are such as well deserve their serious consideration. They allow that the Sabbath is a divine institution, and of inestimable importance. That, as it secures a regular suspension, one day in seven, of worldly labor; a careful cleansing from the dust and dirt of the week, and appearing in decent habiliments; a serious and orderly attendance on public worship; and an opportunity of the most favorable kind for meditating on moral and spiritual subjects; it ought to be countenanced and maintained by every well-wisher to human happiness. Yet they argue and act upon the principle, that what is called the "strict" method of sanctifying the Sabbath is not binding upon Christians at present. But that, after the usual attendance on public worship, it is innocent and useful to indulge in a little relaxation—in social *visiting*—in *riding abroad* for health and pleasure—and in moderate,

well-regulated *feasting* with select friends. To these things they frequently add, the perusal of *newspapers* and *novels*, the writing of *letters* on business, and the various forms of private and social amusement which are adapted to kill time, and to obviate the intolerable weariness which the exercises of religion are apt to induce in the minds of those who have but little taste for them.

Could such persons take even a glance, with Christian eyes, at the natural and unavoidable consequences of their conduct; could they trace with intelligence and candor the immediate and obvious effects of the indulgences which they think so innocent; they could not possibly fail of coming to the conclusion, that their habits are essentially hostile to the best interests of religion and society. Are not their social visiting, their rides of pleasure, and their luxurious feasting, adapted to turn away their minds from the spiritual employments which ought to occupy the day, and to diminish their taste for such occupations? When such amusements immediately follow the public service of the sanctuary, do they not tend to banish from the mind all those serious impressions which that service may have induced? Do not all these dissipating employments necessarily occupy *servants*, and compel *them* to be

absent from the house of God, to engage in servile labor, often as great, and sometimes much greater, than is common on the secular days of the week, and thus cut them off from all the advantages of the Sabbath? And can any one doubt that even the short hours which those who indulge in these habits actually spend in the sanctuary of God, are rendered much less profitable, if their profit be not wholly destroyed, by the dissipating influence of social amusements, or by the heaviness which is the natural consequence of luxurious feasting? In short, is it not evident that these encroachments on the appropriate sanctification of the Sabbath, are not merely adapted to rob God of a large part of that holy time which he claims as his own; but also to unfit those who indulge in them for employing in a suitable manner even the remaining hours which they professedly devote to his service? Thus they "wrong their own souls;" injure their servants; set an example to their neighbors which can scarcely fail of exerting a mischievous influence to an undefinable extent; and render the Sabbath as an appointment of God, less beneficial to all around them.

Besides, every thinking and conscientious man, as he will endeavor to "do to others as he would

that they should do to him;" so he will feel bound to act, in all cases, upon principles which he would be willing should be THE PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL ACTION. Now, suppose every member of this nominally Christian community were to spend his Sabbaths, as is actually done by those of whom I have just spoken. Suppose ALL were to employ a large part of every Lord's-day in visiting, in riding abroad, in feasting, and in the various forms of more decent dissipation in which thousands of nominal Christians think it harmless to indulge: who does not see that the Sabbath would be the most busy, stirring, and even laborious day in the week? Who does not see that all the domestics in society, all the animals which serve us, and all the individuals who live by ministering to the wants and the comforts of others, as well as those to whom they minister, would find the Sabbath the most busy day in the week, and little, very little, either of time or of heart left for its appropriate employments?

It is perfectly manifest, then, that if we desire to sanctify the Sabbath in such a manner as will, in any tolerable degree, secure to ourselves, our servants, our domestic animals, and the community at large, the essential benefits of the day, it can only

be accomplished by "a holy resting all the day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days, and spending *the whole time* in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as may be taken up in works of necessity and mercy." Just in proportion as we deviate from this plain, simple, and Christian view of the subject, we *nullify* the Sabbath, as to its main design, and destroy its most hallowed and precious influence both on ourselves and others.

The following eloquent appeal, by a distinguished Layman, of the British Parliament, cannot be read without feeling that it is worthy of the most serious consideration of all who bear the Christian name.

"Let us appeal to that day which is especially devoted to the offices of religion. Do they joyfully avail themselves of this blessed opportunity of withdrawing from the business and the cares of life; when, without being disquieted by any doubt, whether they are not neglecting the duties of their proper callings, they may be allowed to detach their minds from earthly things, that by a fuller knowledge of heavenly objects, and a more habitual acquaintance with them, their hope may grow full of immortality?' Is the day cheerfully devo-

ted to those holy exercises for which it was appointed? Do they indeed 'come into the courts of God with gladness?' And how are they employed when not engaged in the public services of the day? Are they busied in studying the word of God, in meditating on his perfections, in tracing his providential dispensations, in admiring his works, in revolving his mercies, (above all the transcendant mercies of redeeming love,) in singing his praises, and 'speaking good of his name?' Do their secret retirements witness the earnestness of their prayers, and the warmth of their thanksgiving, their diligence and impartiality in the necessary work of self-examination, their mindfulness of the benevolent duty of intercession? Is the kind purpose of the institution of a Sabbath answered by them in its being made to their servants and dependants a season of rest and comfort? Does the instruction of their families, or of the more poor and ignorant of their neighbors, possess its due share of their time? If blessed with talents, or with affluence, are they sedulously employing a part of their interval of leisure in relieving the indigent, and visiting the sick, and comforting the sorrowful, in forming plans for the good of their fellow-creatures, in considering how they may promote both the temporal and

spiritual benefit of their friends and acquaintance, or, if their's be a larger sphere, in devising measures whereby, through the divine blessing, they may become the honored instruments of the more extended diffusion of religious truth? In the hours of domestic or social intercourse, does their conversation manifest the subject of which their hearts are full? Do their language and demeanor show them to be more than commonly gentle, and kind, and friendly, free from rough and irritating passions?"

"Surely, *an entire day* should not seem long amidst these various employments. It might well be deemed a privilege thus to spend it in the more immediate presence of our heavenly Father, in the exercises of humble admiration, and grateful homage; of the benevolent, and domestic, and social feelings, and of all the best affections of our nature, prompted by their true motives, conversant about their proper objects, and directed to their noblest end; all sorrow mitigated, all cares suspended, all fears repressed, every angry emotion softened, every envious, or revengeful, or malignant passion expelled; and the bosom, thus quieted, purified, enlarged, ennobled, partaking almost of a measure of the heavenly happiness, and become for a while,

the seat of love, and joy, and confidence, and harmony."

"The nature, and uses, and proper employments of a Christian Sabbath, have been pointed out more particularly, not only because the day will be found, when thus employed, eminently conducive, through the Divine blessing, to the maintenance of the religious principle in activity and vigor; but also because we must all have had occasion often to remark, that many persons, of the graver and more decent sort, seem not seldom to be nearly destitute of religious resources. The Sunday is with them, to say the best of it, a *heavy* day; and that larger part of it which is not claimed by the public offices of the church, dully draws on in comfortless vacuity, or, without improvement, is trifled away in vain and unprofitable discourse. Not to speak of those who, by their more daring profanation of this sacred season, openly violate the laws, and insult the religion of their country,—how little do many seem to enter into the spirit of the institution, who are not wholly inattentive to its exterior decorums! How glad are they to qualify the rigor of their religious labors! How hardly do they plead against being compelled to devote the *whole* of the day to religion; claiming to themselves no small merit for

giving up to it a part, and purchasing, therefore, as they hope, a right to spend the remainder more agreeably! How dexterously do they avail themselves of any plausible plea for introducing some week-day employment into the Sunday, whilst they have not the same propensity to introduce any of the Sunday's peculiar employment into the rest of the week! How often do they find excuses for taking journeys, writing letters, balancing accounts; or, in short, doing something, which, by a little management, might probably have been anticipated; or which, without any material inconvenience, might be postponed! Even business itself is recreation, compared with religion; and from the drudgery of this day of sacred rest, they fly for relief to their ordinary occupations."

"Others, again, who would consider business as a profanation, and who still hold out against the encroachments of the *card-table*, get over much of the day, and gladly seek for an innocent resource, in the social circle, or in family visits, where it is not even pretended that the conversation turns on such topics as might render it in any way conducive to religious instruction or improvement. Their families, meanwhile, are neglected; their servants robbed of Christian privileges; and their example

quoted by others, who cannot see that they are themselves less religiously employed, while playing an innocent game at cards, or relaxing in the concert-room."

"But all these several artifices, *whatever they may be, to unhallow the Sunday*, and to change its character, (it might be almost said to 'relax its horrors,') prove but too plainly, however we may be glad to take refuge in religion, when driven to it by the loss of every other comfort, and to retain as it were a reversionary interest in an asylum which may receive us when we are forced from the transitory enjoyments of our present state; that *in itself* it wears to us a gloomy and forbidding aspect, and not a face of consolation and joy; that the worship of God is with us a *constrained* and not a *willing* service, which we are glad therefore to abridge, though we dare not to omit it."*

Another testimony from a layman, and a statesman, still more illustrious—I mean Sir Matthew Hale, Lord Chief Justice of the British Court of King's Bench, and one of the most learned and able men of the seventeenth century—is in the following strong language—language worthy of being inscribed in letters of gold in every Christian dwell-

* Wilberforce's *Practical View*. Chap. IV. Sec. 2.

ing on earth. It is contained in a letter to his grand-children, toward the close of a long, active, and eminently useful life.

"I will acquaint you with a truth that above forty years' experience, and strict observation of myself, hath assuredly taught me. I have been near fifty years a man as much conversant in business, and that of moment and importance, as most men; and I will assure you, I was never under any inclination to fanaticism, enthusiasm, or superstition."

"In all this time, I have most industriously observed, in myself and my concerns, these three things—first, whenever I have undertaken any secular business on the Lord's-day, (which was not absolutely and indispensably necessary,) that business never prospered and succeeded well with me."

"Nay, if I had set myself that day but to forecast or design any temporal business, to be done or performed afterwards, though such forecast and design were just and honest in themselves, and had as fair a prospect as could be effected, yet I have been always disappointed in the effecting of it, or in the success of it. So that it grew almost proverbial with me, when any importuned me to any secular business that day, to answer them, that if they sus-

pected it to succeed amiss, then they might desire my undertaking of it upon that day. And this was so certain an observation of me, that I feared to think of any secular business that day, because the resolution then taken would be disappointed or unsuccessful."

"That always the more closely I applied myself to the duties of the Lord's-day, the more happy and successful were my business and employments of the week following. So that I could, from the loose or strict observance of that day, take a just prospect, and true calculation of my temporal successes in the ensuing week."

"Though my hands and mind have been as full of secular business, both before and since I was a judge, as it may be any man's in England, yet I never wanted time in my six days to ripen and fit myself for the business and employments I had to do, though I borrowed not one minute from the Lord's-day to prepare for it by study, or otherwise. But, on the other hand, if I had at any time borrowed from this day any time for my secular employments, I found it did further me less than if I had let it alone: and, therefore, when some years' experience, upon a most attentive and vigilan observation, had given me this instruction, I grew

peremptorily resolved never in this kind to make a breach upon the Lord's-day, which I have now strictly observed for above thirty years. This relation is most certainly and experimentally true, and hath been declared by me to hundreds of persons, as I now declare it to you."

If this be so—if every desecration of the Lord's-day be not only a sin against God, but also against our own interest and happiness—how great is the infatuation as well as the guilt of those, in high and in low places, who seem to think that every portion of time they can filch from this holy day, and devote to their pleasures or their gains, is so much clear profit! They may make their robbery of God a source of temporary gain; but it will be gain loaded with a curse. The Lord of the Sabbath *can* and *will*, sooner or later, avenge his own cause, and manifest that the prosperity sought and acquired by such impious means is anything but a real blessing.

The advance of our country, within the last ten years, in what is expressed by the general term of "internal improvement," is, in some respects, a most animating spectacle. To see our principal rivers navigated by so many beautiful and convenient *Steam-Boats;* and every part of our union

intersected by *Canals* and *Rail-Roads*, furnishing facilities of intercourse of the most extraordinary kind, and binding together the most distant parts of our confederated republics by ties more powerful than Constitutions and Laws can form—presents to the patriot a prospect of the most intense interest. But, if that patriot be an intelligent *Christian*, he will perceive in this extended scene *one feature* which will fill him with anguish and deep apprehension. I refer to that deplorable profanation of the Lord's-day which is so conspicuous on *all* the lines of our Steam-Boats, Canals, and Rail-Roads, and on *some* of them so obtrusively and shamefully conspicuous, as if the object were to insult as well as to rob God; and to render public feeling as speedily and as thoroughly as possible callous to the outrage on all religious decorum, by giving to it all possible familiarity and publicity. Is it not a fact, that, in a community nominally Christian, and in the midst of the richest Gospel privileges, our public conveyances are studiously made so attractive, by cheapness of fare, by crowds, and by every species of public allurement, in their Sabbatical excursions, that their gains are far greater on that day, than on any other day of the week? What is this but realizing anew, in substance, the old "Book of

Sports," so famous in the land of our fathers, and so hateful to the memory of every intelligent Christian? With this material difference, that the profanations of the sacred day which we lament among ourselves, though countenanced by multitudes of nominal Christians, are not yet sanctioned by legal authority, nor proclaimed with approbation from our pulpits.

It is hardly necessary to ask, in the language of his own word—"Shall not God be avenged on such practices as these?" The truth is, they carry a curse with them. The malediction of a holy God is manifest in the characteristics which accompany, and in the consequences which uniformly follow in their train. They are naturally, I had almost said unavoidably, connected with so much intemperance, impiety, profaneness, domestic disorder, waste of precious time, and the contraction of various corrupting habits; so much adapted to attract and assemble the profligate, and to render them still more hardened and expert in wickedness—that no one who has witnessed them once, can ever doubt that, as they originate in impiety, so they tend indefinitely to deepen and extend those corrupt habits which destroy domestic peace, and poison all the fountains of social and political happiness.

O that, in these circumstances, we had some pious and faithful NEHEMIAH, or EZEKIEL,—as in days of old,—to stand up before this whole nation, and, as the Lord's witness, to bear testimony against the violation of the Sabbath, and to call the people to repentance and reformation! Above all, O that when, in this respect, "the enemy is coming in like a flood," and when so many who occupy high places in society are, practically at least, joining the ranks of the adversary, and cheering him on, the Spirit of the Lord might "lift up a standard against him," and thus save us from that aggravated guilt, and those national judgments, from which it would require a course of miracles to deliver us unless we repent and reform!

After all, however, there is no hope of the Sabbath being really sanctified, in any scriptural, or truly edifying manner, unless there be *some taste for its appropriate duties.* There may be, indeed, without this, a mere *negative* observance, in other words, a decent abstinence from outward and disreputable violations of the day. But unless there be some relish for the spiritual employments of the Sabbath; unless there be some degree of taste for the retired and appropriate employments of the devout worshipper, there can be no genuine, accepta-

ble sanctification of the day. The public eye may be satisfied; but the individual himself will no reap any spiritual advantage. There may be a frigid, inoffensive observance; but there will be no eal Sabbath, to benefit the Church as a body, or tc dify the individual Christian.

Hence the exceeding great importance of endeavoring to train up *children* and *youth*, from their earliest years, in an habitual and deep reverence for the Lord's-day. Connected with this thought, it has often occurred to the writer of these introductory pages, to ask, whether some method might not be adopted to dispel the gloominess which children, in pious families, are too apt to connect with the scriptural and becoming observance of this holy day? He who should frame any plan for accomplishing, in a good degree, this object, would be a real benefactor to the Church and to the world. It cannot be doubted that the object may be, in some measure, attained by wise management. No attempt will be made, at present, to propose a distinct plan for this purpose. Yet if the suggestion of a few hints on the subject should be the means of exciting some more competent counsellors to improve and extend them hereafter, the writer will be abundantly rewarded.

The difficulty most serious, among children, and most desirable to be avoided, is making the exercises of the Sabbath a *mere drudgery*. Whatever, then, can be done to prevent this, and to cause the youthful mind to *take an interest* in the reading, and in the subjects of study prescribed, instead of regarding them as an *irksome task*, will be a most important gain in this matter. With respect to children from five to ten years of age, various methods may be adopted to awaken their curiosity, and engage their attention. Selections from the Bible, especially of the historical kind, accompanied by illustrative *cuts* and *prints*, addressed to the eye, and commented upon by parents or other teachers, can scarcely fail of exciting and gratifying the tenderest minds. Other pious works, adapted to the weakest capacities, and illustrated and adorned in the same manner, for the sake of diversifying the objects of attention, would naturally be productive of the same effects. In regard to children more advanced and intelligent, the happiest results have flowed from their being required every Sabbath, immediately after returning from the hearing of each sermon, to reduce the substance of it to writing, and to read the notes so taken, as an exercise on Sabbath evening. This leads to increased attention in hearing;

to habits of review and reflection afterwards; and to those various forms of intellectual effort, which at once interest and gratify the youthful individual at the time, and gradually, but most surely, promote the strengthening and enlargement of his faculties; to say nothing of that growth in solid theological and scriptural knowledge, which is more important than all the rest, and which is thus acquired by means of a process which may, doubtless, be so managed as to be regarded less as a task than as a recreation.

To these exercises might be added others, equally calling for pleasant effort to most young minds, and equally adapted to promote the intelligent study of the Scriptures. Such as giving to each youth a select portion from the word of God, to be the subject of study and writing; for example, a striking CHARACTER—as that of *Abraham*, *Joseph*, *Moses*, *Solomon*, *Peter*, or *John*;—a TYPE; a MIRACLE; a prominent HISTORICAL FACT—as the *flood*, the tower of *Babel*, the departure out of *Egypt*, the expulsion and destruction of the *Canaanites*, the building of the *Temple*, the Babylonish *captivity* the circumstances of the Saviour's *birth*, the final destruction of *Jerusalem*, &c. If subjects of this nature were given to young people, from ten to six-

teen or eighteen years, to be considered and written upon, and access to commentators and other good helps freely afforded them,—how much improvement might not result from the exercise, both to the children themselves, and their parents or instructors in reviewing their work? Christian parents would have an additional inducement, in these circumstances, to provide their families with the best COMMENTARIES within their reach, and with a small selection of GOOD BOOKS, which would be connected with a sensible enlargement of the habits of reading and thinking,—and, of course, the best kind of reading,—both among young and old.

Besides the employments above suggested, there might be other scriptural exercises assigned, no less adapted to interest the youthful mind, to bring it in contact with the Bible, and, at once, to store it with sacred knowledge, and to beget habits of reflection. Such, for example, as selecting some conspicuous, leading text of Scripture on a given subject, and requesting children to search out, and array in their order, *parallel texts;* and also presenting certain moral and theological topics for consideration—as the sin of lying—disobedience to parents—forgiveness of injuries—the folly of worldly ambition—the advantages of humility—remarkable answers

to prayer—the duty of patience—the sin of evil-speaking, &c.,—and inducing them briefly to put their thoughts on such topics on paper, in the form of short essays, and deriving support to the opinions which they express both from reason and Scripture.

Were exercises of this kind, occasionally alternated, and otherwise diversified, assigned to children and young people, from Sabbath to Sabbath; and assigned not so much as a *task*, as a *privilege*, and, if possible, as a *reward*, and with all those circumstances of kindness and even of occasional approbation, where it can be sincerely bestowed, which wise and pious parents know how judiciously to employ—the consequences might be confidently expected, by the divine blessing, to be both pleasant and salutary;—to render such children familiar with the Bible, without making its perusal a burden; and to enable them to understand its contents without the formality of reminding them at every step that this was the purpose. Indeed, there is reason to believe, that if this plan of spending the intervals of public worship on the Lord's-day, were zealously adopted, and wisely pursued, it would render that day the pleasantest day of the week to children—and cause them to anticipate its return with interest, and be almost sorry when it came to an end; while

it would make the carrying into execution the plan, on the part of parents, as delightful and instructive to *themselves*, as it could be to their beloved *offspring*.

But on these suggestions it would be improper further to enlarge. To Christian parents of sincere and intelligent piety, the slightest hints will be sufficient to set their minds at work in the execution of plans which may be endlessly modified by the peculiar situation of themselves or their children. Let it only be observed, that the great master principle of all sound education,—and of the moral and religious part of it, as well as every other,—is as early as possible to TEACH THEM TO THINK—to IMPART TO THEM AN INTEREST IN THINKING—and, above all, to make THINKING ON THE CONTENTS OF THE BIBLE INTERESTING AND DELIGHTFUL.

One topic more, and these introductory remarks will be closed. The worthy Author of the following Lectures generally speaks of the Lord's-day under the title of the *Sabbath*. To this title some have objected; alleging, that as that was the title of the Jewish day of rest, and as we deem it important to distinguish between the Old Testament rest on the *seventh* day of the week, and that of the *first* day of the week, under the New Testament

economy; so we ought to employ a different word, in all cases, to designate the latter day. This objection seems to have but little foundation either in reason or Scripture. It is undoubtedly true, that, in the second and third centuries, we find the Christian Fathers carefully distinguishing between the Jewish "Sabbath," and the "Lord's-day:" because, when the *change* in the day occurred, it was insisted by the Jewish converts, who formed the great body of the first Christians, that the *seventh day* ought still to be consecrated to the worship of God. The Gentile Christians, therefore, in order to conciliate the Jews, and allure them into the Church, honored their Sabbath; so that, for several hundred years, *both days* were considered as holy days, and devoted to religious purposes, through the greater part of Christendom. The Eastern and Western Churches, indeed, were not entirely of one mind as to the precise character of that celebration of the Jewish Sabbath, which ought to be adopted by Christians. Hence, in the *East*, the *seventh* day of the week was generally observed as a *festival*, as well as the *first;* while in the *West*, it was generally kept as a *fast*. This diversity of practice, and the degree of collision which grew out of this diversity, rendered it, not merely convenient, but

absolutely necessary, that the distinction between the two days should be constantly maintained. Hence the exhortation by IGNATIUS, quoted in a preceding page,—"No longer to observe *Sabbaths* but to keep the *Lord's-day*." In short, the language used by the early Christians, when speaking of this day, seems to have been constantly dictated by the occasion on which they spoke, and the persons addressed. The apostolic writers commonly style it the "first day of the week," because their minds were full of it as a precious memorial of their Master's glorious resurrection from the dead on that day. Toward the close of the century, and for a long time afterwards, the favorite title of the day was the "Lord's-day," as an affectionate memento of the whole character and work of Him to whose kingdom and honor it was devoted. When the early Christians had occasion to speak of this day to the heathen, they called it, as we have before seen, "Sunday," in conformity with the Pagan title given to the first day of the week. And when they were called to distinguish between this day and the Jewish Sabbath, which they also kept, but with less solemnity, they called it by any of the names before mentioned, but more commonly than otherwise by that of the "Lord's-day."

If it be asked what title ought to be given to this season of sacred rest, by *us*, at the present day, I answer, the name is of small importance, provided it be distinctly understood. Perhaps, however, "the Lord's-day" is, on the whole, the most eligible title, and it were to be wished it might be brought into general use, as the most strictly appropriate, and evangelically expressive. But this object can probably never be attained. There is something about this title which will for ever prevent it from being familiar on the popular lip. On the other hand, it is to be lamented that the Pagan title of "Sunday" has taken such deep root in the nomenclature of Christian society. The early Christians seldom used it, but when they were addressing the Pagans. And although it would be going to an extreme in scrupulousness to plead a conscientious objection to the use of this title, because it is Pagan in its origin, which would equally apply to all the other days of the week; yet there seems to be some solid reason for choosing a Bible name for that day which is so important for keeping alive religion in our world, and which holds so conspicuous a place in the language of the Church of God. Among all the names answering this description, the title of "the Sabbath," or "the Christian Sabbath," is,

in my opinion,—next to the "Lord's-day,"—decisively the most eligible. I, therefore, have no objection to Mr. AGNEW's adoption of this title throughout his work. It is convenient, expressive, and unexceptionable.

Among other objections to the use of the term "Sabbath," as expressive of the Lord's-day, it has been incautiously alleged, that "the only bodies of professing Christians, throughout Christendom, who apply this term to the first day of the week, are the Church of *Scotland*, the Dissenters in *England*, and their descendants in *America:* that in this application it is unknown among the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches, and throughout all the Protestant Churches on the continent of Europe." This statement is entirely incorrect. The term "Sabbath" is undoubtedly applied to the first day of the week in the Homilies of the Church of *England;* in the "Acts of the Synod of *Dort*," which, as every one knows, speak the authoritative language of the Church of *Holland;* in the "Ecclesiastical Polity" of "the judicious HOOKER;" in the writings of Bishop PEARSON, of Bishop HORSLEY, of Bishop PORTEUS, of the eloquent WILBERFORCE, of Dr. THOMAS SCOTT, the pious and excellent Commentator, of Messieurs JONES, of NAYLAND, ROBINSON

of LEICESTER, and COOPER, of HAMSTAL RIDWACE, of the Christian Observer, of *London*, and of a host of other English and Continental writers, of the most elevated character. So far, then, as Protestant authority goes, the suffrages in favor of this title are widely extended, and of unquestionable respectability.

On the whole, then, though I prefer the title. "the Lord's-day," as more strictly appropriate to the New Testament economy, and more evangelical than any other; yet I can by no means feel the force of the objections to the terms "the Sabbath," and "the Christian Sabbath." Either of these terms is, assuredly, more likely to be received into popular use than "the Lord's-day." It is a scriptural term, used in a commandment, which I have no doubt is unrepealed, and still obligatory on Christians. It is a perfectly *expressive* term, designating the day as a day of REST from servile labor, and all worldly employments; and intended, also, to be a standing commemoration of Jehovah's *rest* from the work of *creation;* and of our Divine Saviour's *rest* (if the expression may be allowed) from the labors, the sufferings, and the humiliation of the work of Redemption. These ideas surely give to the term *Sabbath*, under the New Testament economy, as

appropriate a meaning, both *philological* and *theological*, as ever it had under the former dispensation.

But it will be improper longer to detain the reader from the following Lectures. They will well reward his perusal; and my prayer is, that they may be extensively circulated and useful.

PRINCETON *July 30th*, 1833.

MANUAL ON THE SABBATH

CHAPTER I.

THE INSTITUTION OF THE SABBATH.

That a Sabbath is spoken of in these words of Gen. 2:3, "and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it," will be admitted, whatever diversity of opinion may exist in reference to its original institution and present obligation. This Sabbath, with its blessings, it is believed, belongs to the whole human family, however much it is decried as a part of Judaism, or a merely human institution, expedient on the whole, but always to yield to any important secular interest, governmental or individual.

At the present day, it has become lamentably common, profanely and wantonly to abuse, and pervert to purposes of gain and pleasure, the sanctity of its hours. Convenience is the law which regulates the multitude on this sacred day, and to this law must yield both the authority of God, and the statutes of men.

In this land, settled by pious pilgrims, and watched over by the kind Providence of our heavenly Father, the question is now practically solving "Shall we obliterate or retain the Sabbath?"

In view, therefore, of the importance of this question, I propose to consider the Institution, Perpetual Obligation, Change of Day, Utility, and Duties of the Sabbath.

Its Institution will claim our immediate attention, and be contemplated in reference to *its date*, and *its Author*.

1. Our attention is directed, in the first place, to the *date* of *the institution* of the Sabbath. On this subject there are two opinions. Some contending that its origin is to be dated from the time when the manna was given to the children of Israel from heaven, which they were forbidden to gather on the seventh day. Others find its origin recorded in the second chapter of Genesis, and date its institution from the cessation of God's work in creating the heavens and the earth. The latter opinion I conceive to be the truth, and shall endeavor to establish it, by disproving the former, and adducing some positive evidence in confirmation of the latter.

I shall proceed to examine the argument of those who date the institution from the time of Moses, 2500 years after the creation. The celebrated Dr. Paley has advocated this opinion, and, in his work on Moral Philosophy, has presented all the reasons which can be adduced in support of it. To these reasons, therefore, we must address ourselves, and weigh their value in the scales of impartial judgment.

It will be proper to turn to the passage on which

the argument principally rests. You will find it recorded in Exod. 16:21—30. "And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted. And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said—To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over, lay up for you, to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade; and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that to-day; for to-day is a Sabbath unto the Lord: to-day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day." On this passage, Paley remarks, "Now, in my opinion, the transaction in the wilderness above

recited, was the first actual institution of the Sabbath. For if the Sabbath had been instituted at the time of creation—as the words in Genesis may seem at first sight to import; and if it had been observed all along from that time to the departure of the Jews out of Egypt, a period of about 2500 years, it appears unaccountable that no mention of it, no occasion of even the obscurest allusion to it, should occur, either in the general history of the world before the call of Abraham, which contains, we admit, only a few memoirs of its early ages, and those extremely abridged: or, which is more to be wondered at, in that of the lives of the three first Patriarchs, which, in many parts of the account, is sufficiently circumstantial and domestic. Nor is there in the passage above quoted, any intimation that the Sabbath when appointed to be observed, was only the revival of an ancient institution, which had been neglected, forgotten, or suspended: nor is any such neglect imputed either to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any part of the family of Noah: nor, lastly, is any permission recorded to dispense with the institution, during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, or on any other public emergency."

Let us dissect the argument, and examine its parts separately.

The first reason in support of the opinion that the origin of the Sabbath is recorded in this passage of Exodus, is the entire want of reference to it in the history of the 2500 years prior to Moses. "It

is unaccountable that it should neither be mentioned, nor even alluded to, in all this period, if it had been instituted from the beginning of the world." That there is some, at least, "obscure allusion" to the Sabbath in the history of that period, I think will appear, when we come to prove directly that the date of the institution is found in Gen. 2:3.

But had there been no allusion, nor any mention of it, it certainly is not so unaccountable as this reason supposes. When it is remembered that the history of 2000 years until the call of Abraham, is written in eleven chapters of Genesis, containing "only a few brief memoirs, and those extremely abridged," can it be a matter of astonishment, that the sacred historian does not inform us whether or not Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, and the pious of those days, kept the holy rest of God? And on the supposition that the Sabbath was instituted at the time of creation, is it presumable that Moses would, in so brief a narration, inform us that the pious had kept this institution of God? There were other important matters to fill up his few pages.

And in regard to the memoirs of the "three first Jewish Patriarchs, which are in many things sufficiently circumstantial and domestic," even they are only a touch upon a few things out of the numerous incidents which must have happened in the space of 500 years. The remaining chapters of Genesis contain the account of these 500 years; and, although in some things minutely domestic, and much

more circumstantial than the history of the preceding 2000 years, yet it is only an abridgment, noticing those things which had a peculiar bearing on the illustration of man's character, and God's dealings with him.

From the time of the call of Abraham, religion assumed a new aspect. God entered into special convenant with the patriarchs, and was preparing the way for fuller discoveries of himself to their descendants. Therefore those domestic details, and circumstantial narratives which you find in their history; all tending to unfold the providence of God over the Patriarchs, his fulfilment of his promises, and their felt interest in his covenant. And is it anything remarkable, "if the Sabbath had been instituted from the creation of the world," that in this brief account there should be no mention of its weekly observance, or of its neglect?

Paley himself remarks, that no neglect of the institution is imputed to the ante- or post-diluvians and infers therefore that the account in Exodus 16 is not a revival of a previously existing institution but its very origin. He seems to take for granted that if the Sabbath had been known from the time of Adam, it had also been utterly neglected, or forgotten, or suspended, and that this would have been mentioned by Moses on reviving it. But the contrary supposition is far more probable, that if then instituted it continued to be observed by the ante-

diluvians and the patriarchs. Of this there are some intimations, as we shall presently see.

What then, on this supposition, should we look for in a history so circumscribed and uncommonly brief as that in Genesis? Would it be expected that Moses, with the single object in view of writing an introduction to the history of the Jewish people, after the departure from Egypt, which must run over a space of 2500 years, and necessarily contain numerous genealogies, would seek an opportunity of introducing the fact, that those of whom he wrote had kept the Sabbath? To me it appears altogether improbable. Moses records the institution in the beginning of his history, and leaves us to infer that the sons of God observed it. Just as he gives us the account of the institution of circumcision in the covenant with Abraham, and after mentioning its observance by him, takes no further notice of it until his own time. But we cannot therefore conclude that it was neglected by Isaac or Jacob and their posterity. For instance, suppose an individual should sit down to write the religious history of this country two hundred years hence. In the commencement he might briefly record the institution of the Sabbath as adopted into the code of the church, and say that the first day of the week was sanctified, or set apart for holy purposes. Then, on the supposition that the day continued to be observed, and nothing occurred to interfere with its holy rest, nor anything especially worthy of remark in reference

to it, would you expect to find the historian informing you of a fact which you would most naturally infer from his previous statement? Certainly not. And much less, if his history were only a brief outline, similar to that in Genesis.

It does not then appear wonderful that in the brief history of those days the Sabbath should not be mentioned, if instituted at the creation. On the contrary, that it is not, is the more natural.

But let us now see whether the conclusion which Paley draws, be authorized by the premises. The premise is, that the history of 2500 years is *silent* on the subject of the Sabbath. The conclusion or the inference, that therefore the Sabbath was not instituted until after this period. Is the conclusion sustained by the premise? Whither would the reasoning conduct us? You have already seen it lead to the conclusion, that from the time of Abraham to Moses, there was no practice of circumcision; that Isaac, Jacob, and their posterity, neglected this rite. And farther, that after the death of Moses, it was unknown for eight centuries, until the time of Jeremiah, who first mentions it. But that the *silence* of the sacred historian will not authorize us to conclude the non-existence of an institution, will appear also in reference to the Sabbath itself after its announcement in the wilderness. The weekly Sabbath is not once mentioned after the death of Moses, in the histories of the Jews written in Joshua, Judges, Samuel, &c., until you come to 2 Kings, 11. This

is more than 600 years from the record in the 16th of Exodus. It is mentioned again in 1 Chron. 9:32, in the time of David, 500 years from the time of the record in Exodus 16. Another instance occurs in the history of Ahaz, 752 years from that period. It is mentioned also three times in Isa. 780 years after. And these are all the instances of its mention, during a period of 1000 years.

The first notice of a Sabbath, is 500 years after the time of the supposed institution in Exodus, and this only incidental. Now apply the argument of Dr. Paley. "If the Sabbath was instituted in the time of Moses, as recorded in 16th of Exodus; and if it was observed all along from that time until the time of David, a period of 500 years, it is unaccountable and much to be wondered at, that there should be no mention, nor even an occasion of the obscurest allusion to it, in a history sufficiently circumstantial and domestic—yea, far more so than the account of the 500 years in which the three patriarchs lived. And must we then conclude that the pious Judges and Samuel observed no Sabbath because it is not alluded to in the history of their times, although there appeared to be an institution of it in Exodus 20 or 16? No more is it a justifiable inference that the patriarchs and ante-diluvians knew of no Sabbath, and that the record in Genesis 2: is not the actual institution of it, because it is not mentioned in the "extremely abridged" history of those times.

What has just been advanced, obviates another of the reasons in support of the opinion we are refuting, viz: "that no neglect of the Sabbath is imputed to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any part of the family of Noah." The more probable supposition is that they observed it. Nor do we expect an imputation of neglect where the subject is not mentioned. And moreover, they might have been negligent without any reference to the fact in so brief an account: for the first word of reproof in reference to the neglect of the Sabbath by the Israelites after the supposed institution in Exodus, occurs in Isa., 731 years after that period.

I shall now turn to the second reason adduced by Dr. Paley, in these words,—"there is not in the passage of Exodus, any intimation that the Sabbath then appointed to be observed, was the *revival of an ancient institution.*" Read Exod. 16:22, &c., con. vs. 4, 5. There is not, it is true, any intimation of this kind in so many words. Neither, on the other hand, is there any intimation that it is the original appointment of the Sabbath. But if we inspect the passage a little, we may perhaps discover circumstances which will lead us to the opinion that it was "the revival of an ancient institution," or at least that it was not the first institution of a Sabbath. The argument from this passage, to prove it the original appointment of the Sabbath, rests principally on the phrases,—"To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord," ver.

23,—"To-day is a Sabbath unto the Lord," ver. 25,—and, "For that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath."

In reference to the last, on which great stress is laid, as containing the original institution, because of the terms "I have given," which it is said can only mean a primary institution, even on the supposition that they do necessarily imply *institution*, it could not be fairly inferred that God had *then* first given or instituted the Sabbath. For they announce the reason of a double quantity of manna on the sixth day: "because the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, *therefore* he giveth you on the sixth day, the bread of two days." But the reason is just as good and as apparent to the people, if we suppose a reference to a previous institution 2500 years before. The words do not necessarily indicate that the Sabbath had been just appointed. They only intimate that because of that day of rest existing among the Israelites, God gave them a double portion on the previous day.

But the phrase, "the Lord hath given," is sufficiently explained by what had occurred the previous day, in the declaration of Moses to the rulers, "To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath to the Lord." This once introduced, the other expression would naturally follow in reference to it. So that the whole argument depends on the first declaration contained in ver. 23. "To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath." And the only question is,

whether this is the first announcement of the Sabbath. If it be, then the other which follows and has reference to it, of course points to original institution. But if not, then nothing can be determined from the latter alone. For if it refer to this event, then its interpretation depends on it.

Let us then direct our attention to this passage, in order to discover whether or not it seems to be the original appointment.

Remark, in the first place, in verses 4, 5, God informs Moses of his intention to supply bread daily, and of his wish that the people should daily gather a sufficiency, and leave none until the next morning. He further informs him that on the *sixth* day, his will was that they should gather twice the usual quantity. This is the whole of the communication with Moses. But there is no mention of a setting apart of the seventh day to sacred purposes. No allusion to the appointment of that day as a Sabbath. But on the supposition that this was the institution of the Sabbath, Moses was of course ignorant of it before, and could know no reason why a double portion should be given on the sixth day. Would it not be natural, therefore, that God should give him the reason of his withholding bread on the seventh day, together with his determination to do so, if Moses were utterly ignorant of any such distinction of that day? While, if acquainted with the Sabbath previously, nothing more would be necessary than just what information is

here recorded to have been given him,—that on the sixth day they should gather twice the usual quantity. The reason would be apparent to him from his previous knowledge of the Sabbath.

A second observation on these verses is, that the division of time into weeks of seven days, was previously known; a fact which cannot be accounted for on the supposition that this was the original institution of the Sabbath.

Now, mark the occasion and the circumstances of the declaration, "To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath." When the manna was seen lying on the ground, the people knew not what it was. Moses informs them it was the bread which the Lord had given them to eat, and that his ordinance was, that every family should gather each day what was necessary, leaving none for the morrow. Accordingly, they so proceeded until they came to the sixth day of the week, on which they gathered twice as much, two omers for one person. Whereupon all the rulers came and told Moses. And he said unto them, "This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord, bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe: and that which remaineth over lay up for you, to be kept until the morning." And this he commands them to do every sixth day, as they would find none on the seventh, the Sabbath.

The congregation, you perceive, knew that the

morrow was the Sabbath, for on the sixth day they gathered enough for two days, not expecting to find any on the seventh. How did they know it? Was it from their previous acquaintance with the Sabbath? or had Moses just informed them of a revelation appointing the day? We have no account of any new revelation to Moses on this subject, when God communicated with him as recorded in verses 4 and 5. And granting that God did then inform Moses of the precise day, which might have been lost in their sore bondage, it does not appear that Moses made any such communication to the congregation, prior to their gathering "twice as much" on the sixth day, or that he had even advised them of the necessity of gathering a double portion. It is apparent, then, from the narrative, that the people were previously acquainted with the seventh day as the rest of the holy Sabbath.

But it may be inquired, if the *people* knew the Sabbath day, how came the *rulers* to be ignorant of it? For it seems that they are at a loss to know why the congregation should gather a double quantity on the sixth day, and therefore come and tell Moses, who announces to them that "to-morrow is the holy Sabbath," as a satisfactory reason. It has been generally supposed that, although acquainted with a Sabbath, they had lost their reckoning in Egypt, and were uncertain about the day. But I confess it does not appear to me probable that the people should have been correct in the day, and all

the rulers have lost it. Nor is it any more probable that Moses could have *informed the congregation* of the day, without the knowledge of the rulers: for they were the proper persons through whom to communicate to the people. And this is additional proof of the inconsistency of the exposition which supposes Moses to have *informed the people* of the occurrence of the Sabbath on the seventh day, and at the same time the rulers to have been ignorant! I am therefore inclined to believe that both rulers and congregation were acquainted with the fact that the seventh day was the Sabbath, and that the rulers came and informed Moses of the people gathering a double quantity on the sixth day, not because they were ignorant of the approach of the Sabbath, but because they might have doubted whether it would be inappropriate to the sanctity of the day, to go out and gather their food and prepare it; especially as they had received express direction to gather *only enough* for one day, without any exception of the sixth: for it is evident from verses 15, 16, that Moses had not previously communicated with them on the subject. Or rather, they informed Moses of the conduct of the people, not suggesting the idea of its being a trangression of previous command nor coming with complaint, or surprise, (which our translation may seem to imply,) but believing them to have done rightly in collecting a double portion, and coming to Moses only to *inform* him, and inquire what was to be done with it. (How perfectly

natural this inquiry, since whatever had previously been kept until morning, had always bred worms, and become offensive!) Moses answers, *This* is that which the Lord hath said,—the people have done rightly, have acted in accordance with the will of God communicated to me. To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath, as they know; therefore *bake* and *seethe* what ye will to-day, and what remaineth over, lay up for you until morning, and it *will not smell* as on other days. So the people laid it up until the morning, and then Moses commanded them to eat it.

I do not understand Moses as speaking to the rulers in justification of the people, or giving the reason for their double gathering on the sixth day, by the annunciation, "To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord," (for this I presume they knew equally with the congregation,) but through the rulers promulging to the people, that as the morrow was the Sabbath, they must to-day bake and seethe what they had gathered, and eat of it on the Sabbath,* as then they might look for no supply. The words, "This is what the Lord hath said," having reference to the conduct of the people, reported by the rulers, or perhaps to the further directions given to Moses, which he now gives to

* We find the will of God on the point clearly unfolded, in the 5th verse: "*On the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in: and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.*" The requisition is plain.

them, "Bake that you will bake," &c., "To-morrow is the Sabbath," being thrown into parenthesis.

But farther; examine the very language of this annunciation, and grant that as far as the determining the precise day is concerned, it is of the appointment of the Sabbath among this people, yet is the language such as would be used if the rulers were familiar with the existence of a Sabbath. "To-morrow *is* the rest of the holy Sabbath." This is the language of one speaking to others whom he knew to be familiar with the subject. Just as if you had been thrown into circumstances in which you had lost your reckoning of days, and should then be released, and, finding me on a certain day of the week preparing a double quantity of food and fuel, should inquire the reason. I would answer, "to-morrow is the Sabbath;" knowing you to have been acquainted with the existence of such a sacred season. But suppose it were a new institution, never before heard of, would I not more fully give you my reasons for being employed as you found me? Or, if I gave you the above answer, would you not be surprised, and ask of the object of the decree, the manner in which the day was to be observed, and the occasion of its appointment? The *language* of Moses then, on this occasion, is not that which indicates the original promulgation of the Sabbath, but precisely such as would be natural when the institution had been previously known, and its duties generally recognized. There is nothing, therefore, in this

whole passage, which looks like a primary institution, but much that indicates the "revival of an ancient law," or an allusion to a prior custom.

The remarks made in answer to this second reason of Paley, will obviate the fourth, "that no permission is recorded to dispense with the institution during the captivity of the Jews in Egypt, or on any other public emergency."

There is no record of their neglecting it during this period: nor do we contend that they did. Neither is there of their neglect or observance during the Babylonish captivity. Yet as Nehemiah, and his associates, observed it on their return, the presumption is they did not forget it in their captivity.

What has been said in reference to the 29th verse of this passage, "for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath," will explain those adduced by Dr. Paley from Ezek. 20, and Neh. 9.

2. I shall now proceed to adduce some *affirmative* proof of the position, that the institution of the Sabbath is to be *dated* from the *creation of the world*.

The *universal division of time into weeks*, presents a fact which must strike every one as singular, and only to be explained by a reference to some event universally known and recognized. This division seems to be adopted by Noah in sending out the dove regularly every seventh day. It is adverted to in the mourning for Jacob: and most probably in the offerings of Cain and Abel, of whom

it is said, that at the *end of days* they presented them before the Lord. This might naturally refer to the end of the week; and the fact of their coming at the same time, indicates some common season for worship. From Exodus we discover that weeks of seven days were familiar to the Jews prior to the time of the giving of manna.

Other nations also have made the same division of days, and have kept the seventh as a holy festival. Homer and Hesiod mention it in their early day, and Josephus remarks, "no city can be found which does not recognize it."

Now what explanation can be given of these two connected facts—this common division into weeks, and the universal consecration of the seventh day to sacred purposes—other than this, that the Sabbath was appointed immediately after the creation, and recurring every seventh day, at once distinguished time into periods of weeks. This appointment would of course be communicated by tradition to all nations, and give rise to the universal observance of the seventh day.

It is thought, there is also proof of the institution of the Sabbath on the cessation of creation, in the *fourth commandment*. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it. It is not pretended by any that this was the first institution of

the Sabbath; and it is manifest from the language that the day had been previously blessed and sanctified. When therefore we find in Gen. 2:3, and in no other place, the same reason given for the sanctification of the Sabbath, as here, and the blessing and hallowing there announced, we are led to conclude that this was the time of the previous blessing referred to in the commandment, and consequently the true *date of its institution.*

We cannot, with Dr. Paley, suppose the author of Genesis to have introduced the Sabbath after the account of the creation, by way of anticipation, stating there only the reason of its appointment, and not the fact. On the contrary, *its mention in this place*, is almost, if not altogether, proof positive that we correctly date its origin at the close of the six days' work of God.

How the idea should ever have entered any one's mind, is unaccountable. Who, on reading the narration, would suppose that Moses did not design to convey the idea that God rested from his work on the seventh day, and *then* sanctified and blessed it? Is it not as natural to interpret the whole account of the creation, as an account of what was accomplished at some future period? Might we not with equal propriety and reason, suppose the narrative of the temptation and fall, to have reference to some distant transaction, and thus be relieved from the disagreeable doctrines of representation and depravity? We feel a confidence that the first and

natural exposition of every man would be, that the words contain the institution of the Sabbath, and that any other must result from a necessity arising out of some preconceived view of the subject.

These considerations, in connexion with the proof that its origin can be found nowhere else, induce the conclusion, that the *Sabbath is coeval with the existence of man*, and *shed its holy light and joy around him on his first day's being.*

II. The second topic of discourse, is the *Author of the institution.* The infidel will, of course, deny the divine institution of the Sabbath; for, with the Bible, he rejects all its institutions. But among those who hold the inspiration of the scriptures, there are some who contend that the Sabbath originally appointed of God, was given only to the Jews, and is, with the ceremonies of that dispensation, entirely abrogated,—that there is *now* no Sabbath of divine appointment, and that the whole obligation to keep a day holy to the Lord, arises from the expediency and utility of it.

You perceive, at once, that if there be no higher foundation of obligation in reference to a Sabbath, than merely human enactment, it is not likely long to maintain its sanctity, against the overwhelming torrent of human depravity, which will never, for any great length of time, sacrifice its own interest to views of expediency. Nothing but divine command brought to bear on the conscience, will be sufficiently powerful to stay the proud march of

fallen man to the accomplishment of his own private views and secular interests. And therefore we rejoice that in the page of inspiration can be found the institution of a Sabbath which is perpetual, and has *God*, and not man, for its author. On this ground we rest all our hopes of its preservation from universal desecration. God will guard his own institutions, and although, for wise purposes, infidels may be permitted to trample it under feet in our land, yet in another will it appear again, and shine forth to the admiration of the world with renewed splendors, until its holy light shall diffuse a heavenly joy through the habitations of man in every corner of this benighted earth.

You read its origin in Gen. 2:3, "And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made." The light of nature could never have informed us, that it was proper to worship God socially one day in seven. It could teach us only the duty of worship, without any of its specifications of time or form. But the Author of nature has spoken, and for the benefit of the human family, set apart every seventh day as sacred to religious purposes. And man can never exempt himself from the obligation, unless he show that the appointment was originally limited to a particular people, or has since been repealed. Neither of which will be very easily done. For however the day may have been changed, that will not affect the sanctification of a

seventh part of time. And having made it appear that its original institution was not connected with the Mosaic law, but with the termination of God's creation of the heavens and the earth, it is of course independent on that system, not affected by its abrogation, and reaches man at the present day, having inscribed on its broad basis, the divinity of its origin, —"God blessed and sanctified it."

May not its divine original be farther maintained from what the Saviour says of himself to the Jews, "The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath?" The term Lord, implies dominion, authority over. The Lord of the Sabbath is, therefore, one who has authority over it, to whom it is subject. Christ, then, declares the Sabbath to be subject to his authority. And it could only be so in reference to its appointment as a day of rest, the prescription of its duties, or the repeal of the statute ordaining it.

But surely, it will not be contended by those who deny the divinity of Christ, and make him only a man, that as a man he had authority either to institute, or prescribe, the duties of the Sabbath, and much less to repeal existing laws?

Whence, then, did he derive his lordship over the Sabbath? Was it as a messenger sent of God? If so, his appointments, prescriptions, and repeals, bear the stamp of divine authority, and derive all their obligation on us from this fact. Even in this light, the declaration, that the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath, would mark it out as a divine institution.

Perhaps it may be answered that the delegated authority of Christ over the Sabbath, extended only to the repeal, or the modification of the Jewish Sabbath, and therefore it could not be argued that its institution was divine, although it could be fairly inferred that its repeal or regulation was. It might be a divine abrogation of a human institution. It might be so, but it does not appear that Christ considered the laws of Moses as those of a human legislator. On the contrary, he everywhere acknowledges his divine legation, and speaks of him as a prophet sent from God to announce his laws to the people of Israel. Granting, then, that the delivery of the law in the wilderness contained the first appointment of a Sabbath, and farther, that Christ's lordship over it extended only to a delegated power to modify its duties, or entirely repeal it, unless it could be clearly shown that the Jewish Sabbath (of which the Saviour speaks) was a human institution, it would follow from his delegated power to modify or repeal, that it was divine. For only the institutor has authority to alter or repeal. And if it be contended that Christ was sent from God with power to repeal, and that this constituted his lordship, even on this supposition the result would be, that God had been the author of it.

But the most natural interpretation of these words is, that Christ here asserts his complete lordship or authority over the Sabbath, both in regard to its original institution, and his consequent right to alte-

or abolish. And this he could do only as he was the Word who was with God, and was God. Hence, the *institution is divine.*

CHAPTER II.

PERPETUAL OBLIGATION OF THE SABBATH.

In the last chapter our attention was directed to that holy day of rest from the ordinary occupations of life, which God has appointed for the human family. It was considered in reference to its divine institution, and the date of its origin. In opposition to those who find its rise under the Jewish dispensation, and deduce it from the passage recorded in Exod. 16:22—31, it was shown to be nothing remarkable, "if the Sabbath was appointed at the time of creation," that there is no mention of it in the brief record of 2500 years, but that this is rather as we should have expected it to be—and that the argument from the *silence* of the historian, if valid, would lead us to the conclusion that there was no Sabbath among the Israelites for five hundred years after the supposed institution in Exodus, and that for eight hundred years from the time of Moses, there was no practice of circumcision.

On an examination of the passage in Exodus 16, there was discovered nothing in the language, or recorded circumstances, which indicates the proclamation of a new, but everything which evinces a

reference to an old institution, with which the rulers and people had both been familiar.

The passages of Nehemiah and Ezekiel, and that verse in Exodus 16, in which God is said to have *given* them the Sabbath, on which much dependence had been placed, were seen to contain no evidence of original institution, and to be fully explained by the interpretation of the preceding verses of the passage in Exodus. After this removal of objections, affirmative evidence was adduced, fixing the date of the institution at the close of the six days' creation.

1. The acknowledged fact of the division of time into weeks among all nations, and the allusion to it in Genesis; the only satisfactory reason for which division, apparent to us, is the traditional knowledge of a Sabbath.

2. The *universal* sanctification of the seventh day to religious purposes, in connexion with the fact that the same great reason is assigned for it.

3. The evidence derived from the fourth commandment, in which God himself declares a *previous* blessing and hallowing of the day, and seems to fix that previous time at the period mentioned in Genesis, by his use of the same language there recorded; and not at that spoken of in Exodus, in which there is no hint of a hallowing, nor any reason given for the appointment.

4. The narration itself, in which there is every appearance of the preservation of the order of time,

and which would strike every reader as an account not only of the reason, but equally of the time of the institution of the Sabbath.

I shall now proceed to prove the *perpetual obligation of the Sabbath.*

1. This may be established, in the first place, *from the date of the institution.* In the language of our opponents themselves, "If the divine command was actually delivered at the creation, it was addressed no doubt to the whole human species alike, and continues, unless repealed by some subsequent revelation, binding upon all who come to the knowledge of it. This opinion precludes all debate about the extent of the obligation."

The only ground on which it is attempted to remove the present and future obligation of the Sabbath, is that it had its rise among the ceremonial institutions of the Israelites, and is therefore done away under the gospel, as one of the shadows of the law of carnal commandments. If this ground have fallen, and the institution be rightly placed at the very commencement of time, long before the Israelites as a people had a name on the earth, then it comes down to us as part of the species for whom it was given—then the Jewish nation observed it and adopted it into their law, both civil and ecclesiastical, not as peculiar to themselves, but as a portion of that family whose common gift it is,—and then, when they cease to be the treasury of the oracles of God, the royal priesthood, the holy

nation, it descends to the Gentiles as their rightful inheritance, and becomes a *sign* between God and all people who observe it. An institution which was confirmed before of God, the law, which was 2500 years after, could not disannul to make it of none effect.

Let be remarked, also, that the Sabbath was given to Adam in innocency, to be observed by him and his posterity in case of their continued holiness, and formed no part of the hand-writing of ordinances, which was added because of transgression. Neither is it too carnal, nor does it partake too much of an external ordinance, for the spirituality of any dispensation given to man on earth, since it was appointed for him in all his primitive spirituality, as he came fresh from the hand of his Creator, clothed in the moral beauty of his own image.

And it surely can never be contended that its obligation was confined to man in his state of holiness for it existed, and its observance was commanded, as well after, as before the fall. It stands on the same footing with the institution of marriage. This took place between Adam and Eve prior to their loss of innocence, but, as it was appointed for the whole human family, it existed after the fall, under the law, and since its abrogation. And any peculiar modification of the original institution which may have been permitted, or any severity of penalty that may have been attached to its violation under the Mosaic polity, has not affected its present and per-

petual obligation. So the Sabbath, set apart immediately on the creation of man, cannot be supposed to belong exclusively to the Israelites, unless so recognized. For they are no more nearly related, nor any more intimately connected with Adam, than other branches of his great family; nor can the adoption of it into their code, any more restrict it to them, than the adoption of the marriage institution can confine it to their nation exclusively. And of course, the *abrogation* of a system of rites and ceremonies which had its beginning thousands of years subsequently, and of which it was no original part, only incorporated as a law universally binding, cannot blot out its prior and superior obligation.

Some explicit repeal of the statute by divine authority, must be pointed out, before we dare abolish that holy rest, which had its origin under circumstances, and at a time, which clearly mark it out as the property of every people. If it were a part of the ceremonial law, then it were easy to show its abrogation under the general repeal of the handwriting of ordinances, by the coming of Christ, the great antitype. But since it is no part of that system, we must look for some other annunciation, which will strike it out from the number of gospel institutions. That annunciation cannot be found, and therefore, on the ground of its early date, at the creation, "it continues binding on all who come to the knowledge of it."

2. I establish the perpetual and universal obliga-

tion of the Sabbath, in the second place, by the *perpetual application of the reason attached to its institution*, and the *universality of the end proposed by it*.

The great reason assigned by God for blessing and sanctifying the Sabbath, both in the second chapter of Genesis, and in the fourth commandment, is the fact that he rested from the work of creation.

It ought to be noted that there is implied in the word rested, *completion*, *perfection*, intimating that God's rest was not an actual idleness, a vacuity of mind or employment, but the completion of a work which in its every part was such as he designed, and would display to intelligent beings the glory of his character. At the close of this work, executed in infinite wisdom, and contemplated by Deity himself as very good, God sanctified a seventh portion of man's time, and left him his own example to imitate. And the example of Jehovah, when set before us, as far as it is imitable, becomes authoritative law to the whole universe.

It would be singular indeed, if God's ceasing from a work which was intended to exhibit his glorious perfections to the admiration of all intellectual beings, were a reason to be employed in securing the observance of the Sabbath among the Jewish people only. It is manifestly alike applicable to all, and strongly intimates, that the institution with which it is connected, was appointed to be equally extensive in its obligation. God rested from his work which

he had created and made, blessed and hallowed the day, and commanded, not only Jews, but all people, to remember it and keep it holy.

Nor will it suffice as an answer to this argument, to say, that in Deut. "the commandment is repeated with a reference to a different event," viz. the deliverance of the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage; and that when afterward "spoken of as peculiar to the people of Israel," it is founded on this same universal reason. There is nothing absurd in the idea of adding to the first weighty reason, others of subordinate importance, which are forcibly applicable in the circumstances in which they are announced. Thus, while in the fourth commandment God promulges the chief reason for which he had blessed the Sabbath, in repeating it afterward, he impresses on the Jews with additional force, their obligation in reference to part of the duties of the day, by adverting to their former subjection to bondage: "Because ye have been servants in Egypt, with special reason, I command you to remember the Sabbath, that thy *man-servant* and thy *maid-servant* may rest as well as thou."

In regard to the other part of the answer, "that God's rest from creation is proposed as the reason of the institution, even when it is spoken of as peculiar to the Jews," nothing is certainly more natural than that this prime reason should be enforced on the Jews, when God was treating peculiarly with them, and they were the only people on earth

who observed this sacred time. The same reason would have been given had any other than the Jews been the subjects of the command.. To say that it is "spoken of as peculiar to the Jews," however, is more than is warrantable. It is indeed recognized as peculiar to them in its observation, and renewed enforcement, but not in its obligation.

The fact then that God's resting from his work is attached to the command, as the foundation of the institution, when he gave it specially to the Jews, does not limit either the reason, or the command, but leaves them equally applicable to all others.

If we now advert to the *end* or *objects* of the institution, we shall perceive them to be adapted equally to the whole human family, and not peculiarly to the Jews. And hence its *perpetuity* is inferred. Was it intended to relieve both man and beast from the wearisomeness of uninterrupted labor? Then do all need it as much as the Israelites. Was it designed to be commemorative of the eternity, independence, self-existence, and all the glorious perfections of Deity, as evinced in the work of his hands? Then are all, equally with the Jews, interested in this commemoration. Was it provided as a means of man's growth and establishment in holiness? Then does its end proclaim it loudly to be the birthright of every intelligent creature on God's earth, a common inheritance to all the sons and daughters of Adam. Who is the Jew, that his constitution alone, and that of his servants and beasts,

require a regular return of freedom from the exhausting fatigues of constant labor? Who is the Jew, that he only may set apart one day in seven for singing the high praises of God,—that he only is obliged to bear in remembrance the power, and wisdom, and goodness of God, displayed in his completed work of creation? Who is the Jew, that he only needs this pre-eminently blessed mean of attaining and securing conformity with the image of God? No! verily, you and I, and Adam, and Noah, are, as much as he, interested in this heavenly attainment. We, equally with him, must commemorate the six days' work of Jehovah. And our constitution, as well as his, was so made as to require the rest of the Sabbath. Whether, then, you consider the assigned reason of the institution, or its end, you arrive at the conclusion that it is perpetually obligatory wherever known.

3. This leads me to a third proof of its perpetual obligation, derived from the declaration of the Lord of the Sabbath, that *it was made for man.* It was instituted by God, and intended not for any particular class of men, but for the whole race, wherever, and under whatever circumstances, they should be found. It was adapted in its nature not to one sex of mankind, but to both—not to man in his innocence only, but in his guilt—not to man under the Mosaic system exclusively, but to man under the patriarchal, the gospel, the millennial state also. The term *man* is generic, and not specific or distinctive

It includes Adam with all his descendants as long as they live on earth, sustain their present relations, and possess the capacities of human nature. To man it comes with the whole force of its obligation, whether he be rich or poor, high or low, master or servant, king or subject—whether in his individual or in his associated capacity. For if it was instituted for man indefinitely, then the law binds him in all his relations, whether to his family or to his government. And the fact of his acting with others, as a legislator, or a ruler of his country, will not release him, for he is still man: and so are all who are associated with him in legislation and government. And, therefore, if individually obliged by the law in this relation, so also *collectively*.

4. As a fourth evidence of the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath, I may briefly appeal to *prophecies* which *recognize its existence under the gospel, and of course to the end of time*, as the present dispensation is announced as the final one, and appointed for the church until the providential system of this world shall be wound up, and Christians be caught up unto the Lord in the air.

Examine, for instance, Psa. 118:22—24. "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." If this passage be prophetical, and refer to the times of the Messiah, as it would seem from 1 Pet. 2:7,

where the language is quoted as applicable to Christ, then under the gospel is there "a day which the Lord hath made," or set apart for himself, on which the gates of the sanctuary will be open, and the righteous will enter, to praise the Lord, rejoice and be glad in it. This is certainly completely an exactly fulfilled in the united worship which is offer ed to the Lord on that day, on whose glorious morn ing, bright with blessings to the world, he became the head stone of the corner.

Look, also, at Isa. 56:6—8. "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant: Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all people. The Lord God, which gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather others to him, besides those that are gathered unto him." "Sons of the stranger," it is universally conceded, is a phrase equivalent to the Gentiles. And, that this is a prophecy relative to the last days, or the gospel state, in which the multitude of the Gentiles should join themselves to the Lord, is apparent from the assertion, that in the days of the accomplishment of this prophecy, the house of the Lord shall be a house of prayer for *all*

people, and that there should be gathered to the outcasts of Israel, others beside those that were gathered unto him.

Never was the house of God an house of prayer for all people, until the close of the Jewish dispensation and the introduction of a better covenant, under which neither at Jerusalem, nor Samaria, would be the place of worship, but wherever two or three were gathered together to worship in the name of Christ. But *at this time* the prophecy indicates the existence of the Sabbath, and places the piety of the worshippers partly in their keeping this holy day from polluting it. Consult also Isaiah 66:23.

5. A fifth argument in favor of the *perpetual and universal obligation of the Sabbath*, is *found in the moral nature* of the institution. It has been contended that it is not moral, but ceremonial, as much as many other institutions under the law, such as the passover, the feast of tabernacles, of pentecost, &c. For the determining of this point, it will be necessary to advert to the distinction between moral and positive, or ceremonial precepts.

Moral are such as regulate the moral conduct of intelligent beings, and result from the immutable relations of creatures to God and to one-another. Of course, they are universally binding wherever the relations exist, which they recognize and regulate. Such are the precepts requiring us to love and worship God, and honor our parents.

Positive precepts are those which *create duties*,

which require conduct of moral beings, that, independently of the precepts, would never have been obligatory, but always remained indifferent. They impose obligations, which are not dependent on the natural relations of those obliged, but are originated entirely by the commands themselves.

Those, also, are generally called positive precepts, which *first make known* a certain course of conduct, or certain acts, as duties, which, although resulting from the relations of rational beings, and perceived to do so when known, would never have been discovered to be duties, but for the precept pointing them out as such. These, however, are, properly speaking, moral in their nature, as they do not regulate acts which are indifferent, nor *create* duties; but only command what was already a duty, although unknown by the subjects of the command.

If you now apply these definitions to the command requiring the observance of the Sabbath, you will discover it to be of a moral nature. What are the purposes of the command? It requires cessation from secular employments, rest for both man and beast, one day in seven—it demands the sanctifying or setting apart of this day to religious purposes, especially the commemoration of God's works and attributes therein displayed — it provides for the spiritual and eternal interests of men, in the acquisition and increase of holy dispositions. And are not these requirements founded on the nature and

relations of man? Is it a matter of indifference, independently of the precept, whether man gives that repose from hard labor, to himself and his beast, which experience has taught us to be essential to the strength and permanent vigor of body and mind? Is it a thing indifferent, whether or not man recognize his dependence on God, and commemorate the perfections of Jehovah in proper worship? Is it wholly indifferent whether men attain holiness or not, and thus fulfil the great end of their being? Plainly, all these things result as duties, from the relations of man as a moral being, and therefore the command requiring them, is of a moral nature, and so is the institution of which they are the purposes. But it is the characteristic of a moral precept, or of an institution founded on a moral precept, to be universal and perpetual in its obligation, wherever the relations exist which it regulates; therefore, the Sabbath being such an institution, is perpetually obligatory on man.

Nor will it be any objection to this, that man could not have known the propriety of worshipping God socially *one day* in seven, but for the precept requiring it. Men were universally bound, from their relations to God, to commemorate his perfections exhibited in the works of his hand, and were equally bound to do it in the best manner. Whenever, therefore, they ascertain the best manner of performing the duty, (and this is now made known by the choice and command of God,) that manner

is binding equally with the duty itself, and as constituting part of it. The observance of one day in seven, is, then, a perpetual and universal duty. Its moral nature, and, consequently, perpetual obligation, may be clearly inferred also from the fact, *that the prophets uniformly class a violation of its sanctity with transgressions of the moral law*, as may be seen by a reference to those passages of the prophecies, in which the subject is mentioned. This cannot be otherwise explained, than that God, who inspired the prophets, considered the Sabbath a moral institution, and its desecration equally criminal with the transgression of any other moral law.

6. I prove, again, the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath, from its *place* in the *Decalogue*, or *moral law*. The nine other precepts of the law, are manifestly, and without exception, acknowledged to be moral, and of universal application and obligation; and no good reason can be given, why this is not equally so. Its *moral nature*, also, might have been proved from its location.

But I wish it to be remarked, that the law commanding the observance of the Sabbath, along with the remaining nine of the Decalogue, was announced by the awful voice of God himself, from the midst of lightnings and thunderings, so that the people trembled, stood afar off, and desired that God might speak no more.

Observe, farther, that it was written by the *finger* of God, on a *table of stone*, first prepared by him

self; and when this was broken, again written with his own finger on a table of stone prepared by Moses. A table, or pillar of stone, was a symbol of durability and perpetuity; and this symbol God employed, no doubt, to express the perpetuity of the command written upon it. He signalized this precept also, with the others of the Decalogue, by *twice* impressing them with his own finger on the tables of stone.

Now the question presents itself, why were these ten precepts so remarkably signalized? Why were they uttered by the voice of God amid the blackness and darkness, and the horrible tempest of Sinai? Why were they inscribed with his own finger on monuments symbolical of perpetuity, while the other laws were all written by Moses himself as dictated by God? Was it not to point out their pre-eminent importance, and emphatically their universal and perpetual obligation? And why, if the fourth be not equally obligatory with the rest, was it introduced among them without limit or restriction, and surrounded with all the splendors, and marked with all the peculiarities which attached to the others?

There was another ritual law in which it might have been written, and would have been, had not Jehovah designedly placed it where it would be distinguished as a part of the moral law, perpetually binding on man.

Here, then, it stands linked in close connexion with the other nine precepts of the moral law, which

are confessedly binding on all. And who shall break the link and sunder it from its fellows? Here it is, written by the same finger which recorded the rest, bright with the glories which flashed from the mount of its promulgation, and who shall limit its application to one people, and strip it of all the peculiarities which Jehovah has thrown around it Stand off; for this is holy ground.

It will not do to say, in answer to this, as Dr. Paley has, "that the distinction between moral or natural, and positive, was not known to the simplicity of the ancients." Be it so. This is God's work. Did not he know the distinction? and did he not foresee that it would be known in future days, if it never was by the Israelites? Let it be remembered, that this portion of the Mosaic laws was written by God himself, and has always been distinguished from the ritual part, by the Jews themselves, by Christ, and by Paul. And it ever will be distinguished while the record of it remains, and the recognition of its peculiarity by the Lord of the Sabbath himself, and by his chief apostle. Perpetual obligation, then, seems, as it were, written on the Sabbath, by the finger of Deity himself.

7. I here might advert to passages of the New Testament which recognize the existence of a Sabbath, after the abrogation of the ritual or Levitical law, subsequently to the resurrection of Christ, and the introduction of the gospel state. But I shall omit these, and proceed, finally, to observe that there

is in the New Testament, *no repeal* of the *law instituting the Sabbath.* As already remarked, the abrogation of the ceremonial law, which hath "waxed old and vanished away," cannot affect this, unless it could be clearly shown to be a part of it; which it cannot. And if, as has been proved, it is moral in its nature, we should never look for a repeal, for it *must* then be universally obligatory, while man continues in being on earth.

However, as some who consider it in the light of a positive institute, think they find its repeal or abrogation in some expressions of the apostle Paul, it behooves us to examine them.

The first I shall notice, you will find in Colossians 2:16,17. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy-day, (or feast-day,) or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days, (or Sabbaths:) which are a shadow of things to come." Here, it is contended, the Sabbath is abrogated along with the ceremonial law. That the apostle here speaks of the ceremonial statutes, cannot be doubted, for he calls them a hand-writing of ordinances, and alludes to Judaizing teachers who attempted to beguile them with enticing words. But among these ordinances there were several Sabbaths exclusively of the weekly; and it would devolve on those who plead for its abrogation, to prove that there is here an allusion to the weekly Sabbath. And if this were proved, it would only be the abrogation of the Jewish Sabbath, or of the seventh day

as a Sabbath, and would not at all affect the existence of the Lord's-day or Christian Sabbath.

Galatians 4:10,11. "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years: I am afraid of you," is another verse supposed to contain a repeal. No one could intelligently interpret this passage as including under the term "days or times," the weekly Sabbath. The apostle writes to Gentile converts, who had been seduced from the simplicity of Christ, by those who plead for an observance of the ceremonial rites and appointments, in connexion with the institutions of the gospel, and says, he is afraid of them, because they were returning to the weak and beggarly elements. Nothing, therefore, can be deduced from this verse, until it is shown that the Sabbath, instituted before the law, and then again written in the Decalogue, is a part of the weak and beggarly elements which bring into bondage, and that the apostle feared their observance of the Lord's day.

The only remaining passage on which any stress is laid, as containing a release from the obligation f the Sabbath, under the gospel, is found in Romans 14:5. "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." It seems that a difference of opinion existed among the members of the church of Rome, in reference to the obligation of observing certain days as holy festivals. Part of the church were christianized

Jews, part Gentiles. The former, strongly attached to the ceremonial institutions of the law, considered themselves still obliged to attend to these religious days, and to abstain from certain meats which by the law were pronounced unclean; while the latter, persuaded of their Christian liberty, felt themselves perfectly free to make no such distinction of days or of meats. That the apostle here writes in reference to a conscientious difference of opinion and practice, in regard to the observance of the ritual meats and days, which originated in the commingling of Jews and Gentiles in one body, is universally acknowledged. But what we have remarked in reference to the Sabbath, as belonging to the moral law, and instituted prior to the giving of the ceremonial, and therefore unaffected either by its institution or abrogation, removes it entirely from all controversy founded on this passage. Before there is even any room for argument from this verse, it must be proved that the Sabbath was a ceremonial institution.

Although, at first sight, this language might seem to do away all distinction of days, a little observation will convince you that it only speaks of ceremonial distinctions. For, in verses 2d and 3d, you find it asserted absolutely, that one believed he might eat *all things:* another ate only herbs, but he that eateth must not despise him that eateth not. Now, it is clear, that none of them supposed they might eat all things absolutely considered, but *without re-*

ference to any ceremonial distinctions of clean and unclean animals. Nor were there any who did not eat at all; but the phrase "him that eateth not," is necessarily interpreted of his not eating the *ceremonially unclean* animals, or of his abstinence from all *flesh*, lest he might be defiled. So also of the days, the difference of opinion was about ceremonial days, as of ceremonial meats.

There is no repeal, therefore, of the law of the Sabbath, in the New Testament. And even if it stood on the footing of a positive precept or institution, and not of a moral law, it would be necessary to show its repeal before we dare dispense with it. For positive law from God is equally binding with moral, since God always acts and commands rightly, and for the best reasons. But instead of repealing, the Saviour has established it. He not only observed the Sabbath strictly, but in an exposition of the moral law, of which it is a part, he declared that he came not to destroy it, nor should *one jot or tittle of it fail.*

Let us mortals, then, beware how we touch an institution of God, established immediately on the close of creation, renewedly enforced amid the thunders of Sinai, sanctioned by the example of Christ, and neither repealed explicitly, inferentially, or by its own limitation; for limit it has none.

And let us, also, be cautious how we strip it of its spirituality by a mere Pharasaic observance of it, and how we rob it of its peculiarity as a *holy day*,

by a mistaken idea of our superior perfection, in freedom from all external bonds; or of its external service, as unsuited to the liberty and spirit of the new dispensation. Let us recognize and feel our individual obligation, repent of past transgression, and henceforth "remember the Sabbath to keep it holy."

CHAPTER III.

CHANGE OF DAY.

It has already been proved that the *date* of the institution of the Sabbath, is rightly fixed at the close of the six days' creation; and in the last discourse, that it is of perpetual and universal obligation, laying its claims unyieldingly on man wherever he exists, and under whatever circumstances and relations.

This was established by the following arguments the date of the institution, removing from it local reference, and partial obligation—the perpetual application of the reason annexed to it, and the universality of the end proposed by it—the declaration of the Lord of the Sabbath, that "it was made for man"—prophecies which recognize its existence under the gospel, and, of course, to the end of time—the moral nature of the institution—its place in the Decalogue, or moral law, which is emphatically distinguished from all others—and the absence from

the scriptures of any repeal or abrogation of the institution.

The *change in the day on which the Sabbath is to be remembered and kept holy*, or the *transfer* of the *sanctification and blessing from the seventh* to the *first* day of the week, is the next subject of consideration.

As a preliminary observation, I would remark, that having established the divine institution of a Sabbath, and its present and perpetual obligation, those truths are entirely independent on the present inquiry. Whether it be proved or not, that the day is altered, it will be binding on all to observe a seventh part of their time weekly, as a day devoted to sacred purposes. It is agreed, on all hands, that the seventh was the original day of the week appointed for the Sabbath. The first, is now placed in competition with it, as possessing higher claims. But if any are not satisfied with regard to a change, the obligation still rests on them with all its weight, to keep sacred the original day. It is incumbent on every individual to be fully persuaded in his own mind, and conscientiously to set apart one of the days, as a holy rest unto the Lord. And that man is guilty, who takes occasion from the difference of opinion among Christians on this point, to quiet his conscience, and wrap himself up in the lulling conclusion, that it is a small matter whether or not any Sabbath be religiously observed, whose whole object in attempting to overthrow the obligation of a

Christian Sabbath, seems to be, not the maintenance of a conscientious opinion, but the effort of living depravity to throw off the chains both of Mosaic and Christian law, and be free and unbridled in its race to ruin.

A second prefatory observation worthy of remembrance, is this, that the fourth commandment, which is the great law on this subject, seems clearly to distinguish between the Sabbath itself, as an institution, and the day on which it was to be observed. Exodus 20: 8—11. "Remember the *Sabbath* day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Here, you will remark, that the Sabbath indefinitely, is hallowed and blessed—that the Sabbath is required to be remembered, on whatever day it might at any period be appointed. The seventh is here fixed as the Sabbath under the Jewish dispensation and must continue to be the day until there is a manifest change, by the same authority which originally appointed it. You perceive, however, that by attaching the blessing and sanctification, not to the day, but to the Sabbath, or holy rest, (which

undoubtedly was designedly done,) God left the way open for a change of the day, whenever good reasons for it should occur.

From indefinite views and long habit we are apt to imagine the special day to be an essential and immutable part of the law, as if it rested as much on our moral relations, as the duty itself of holy resting a seventh part of our time. But it is only a circumstance, mutable at the will of the Divine Legislator; as much so as the *place* of worship. Worship itself, is binding on every moral being, and immutably binding, as resulting from his relations to God. But the place of assembling for worship, may be altered as circumstances, in view of the Deity, may require. It may be confined to Jerusalem, as it respects the Jews, while they are a peculiar people, or it may afterwards be located wherever two or three shall meet together in the name of Christ, to present a spiritual offering to the Lord.

A third introductory remark seems necessary, that although there be no explicit injunction of the Christian Sabbath, no annunciation in so many words, that under the gospel the first day is to be devoted to the duties of the Sabbath, if we can discover manifest reasons for its gradual rather than its sudden and immediate introduction, and exclusive obligation on all Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles; and further, can recognize its appointment, in the authoritative example of the apostles, we may be as completely convinced of God's intention as if

he had left the plain record of it on the pages of the Bible.

If the institution itself were to be abolished, remembering all the distinctive peculiarities which marked its introduction, we should naturally expect some definite and positive abolition. But when merely a circumstance of the institution, a thing entirely adventitious, is to be altered, it may easily be pointed out in another, yet equally binding manner. When only the particular day of weekly time, which shall be devoted to the commemoration of God's perfections, and the cultivation of holy dispositions, and which cannot affect the obligatory nature of the holy rest itself, is to be changed from the seventh to the first, this can be fully and clearly done, by apostolic practice, and the recognition of that practice, by the Lord of the Sabbath himself.

1. In proof of the change, I remark in the first place, *that if there be a work which more gloriously displays the divine perfections, than that of creation, the presumption is, that the day of its completion will, thenceforth, be the Sabbath.*

Such a work, then, is the work of redemption. And if, when God's plastic hand had fashioned the world, and clothed the earth with fragrance and beauty, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy; so, also, when the babe was born in Bethlehem, who was to be the chief agent in the work of redemption, did a multitude of the heavenly host announce his birth, pro-

claiming good tidings of great joy, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men. And when he ascended to heaven, leading captivity captive, the voice of ten thousand angels was heard crying, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates! even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in! And who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle."—He that has overcome the prince of darkness, and is now returning in triumph from the most glorious work ever achieved, having spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly.

God's moral government of the universe of intelligent beings, is his chief glory. But Jesus Christ, and he crucified, or, Jesus Christ in the accomplishment of the work of redemption, is the bright sun, which throws light, and warmth, and beauty, over this whole moral system. In this work, angels are ministering spirits; and every high archangel, and seraphim, and cherubim, will sing a louder song, and shout with more transporting joy, when all its grand purposes are fulfilled, than when they heard the potent word of God bidding creation into beautiful existence. This is the golden chain which will for ever bind in happy union to one another, and in higher and holier adoration to God, all the pure and immortal spirits of his great kingdom. Oh! what a work is this! Ye angels! swell your notes, and let the universe hear of its glory—let heaven re-echo

its praise. It is the new creation, and in comparison with it, the former shall be remembered no more, nor come into mind. By it is made known to the principalities and powers in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God. And while the material system is continually wasting away, and the heavens and the earth which God brought into being and form, shall be rolled together as a scroll, shall wax old like a garment, and be changed as a vesture, the new heavens and new earth will be growing in beauty and glory, be permanent as the throne of God, and to its years there shall be no end.

Inasmuch, then, as the work of redemption is recognized in the Bible as the chief work of heaven, is represented as intended to display to the hosts of seraphim and cherubim the manifold wisdom of God, and containing in it exhibitions of the perfections of Jehovah, which awaken the earnest investigation, and profound adoration of angels, who desire to look into it; and inasmuch as it is the great purpose of the Sabbath that man shall commemorate the attributes of God as unfolded in his works, the strong presumption is, that now, since a greater work is accomplished than when God rested from all which he had created and made, and his perfections are more gloriously displayed in it, the completion of this work will be the object of commemoration, and the day on which Christ entered into his rest, having ceased from *his* work as God did from his *own*, will be the day on which the righteous will

enter into the courts of the Lord's house; and in private also feel that this is the day which the Lord hath made and set apart for the duties of devotion. That day was the *first* day of the week, when the Redeemer burst the bars of death and arose triumphant over the grave. In accordance with these ideas is the prophetical declaration in Isa. 65:17,18, Behold I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. An inspection of the passage will convince you that the prophet speaks of the times of the gospel. The new creation here mentioned, as the verses interpret themselves, is the church, denominated Jerusalem, and made joyful and glorious by the death and resurrection of her Lord. This new creation, you remark also, so far surpasses the former in glory, that it shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. All this seems to intimate that the exhibitions which were made of the perfections of God in the first creation, should dwindle into comparative nothingness before the brighter displays of the second—that the former was the mere shell, to be thrown away, when the pearl of great price inclosed in it should be discovered. And indeed the apostle, in his Epistle to the Ephes. 3:9,10, leads us to believe that the original creation of the heavens and the earth was only a preparatory measure for the accomplishment of a

higher and nobler work: the moral renovation and confirmation in holiness of a multitude of intelligent creatures. He writes, God hath created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent, that now unto principalities, and powers, in heavenly places, might be known by the church his manifold wisdom. The intention of God's creation of all things seems to have been the exhibition of his glory to the hosts of heaven, by means of his manifold wisdom, discoverable in the redemption of the church. The latter is the magnificent temple; the former the scaffolding employed in its erection. The one, the outer court of the Gentiles; the other, the holy of holies.

It is presumable, therefore, that the wisdom of God would determine that the latter, after its accomplishment, should be commemorated in preference to the former, and by its brighter glories, so attract the attention of intelligent beings, as to throw a shade over the former, and occasion a comparative forgetfulness of it. And if this new creation, in the language of the prophet, is to be the subject of rejoicing and commemoration rather than the other, it is further presumable that the day of its completion, from that time forth would be the day of holy rest, and sacred remembrance of the works of Jehovah our God.

The prophecy, moreover, has never been fulfilled, except in the *first day* commemorations of the Christian Sabbath: and in these it has been remarkably and precisely accomplished. For who does not

know that while in the prayers and praises of the church on this day, and in the preaching of God's ministers, the old creation is occasionally the theme, it is the new which constitutes the burden of their song, and the essence of their proclamation? We may therefore fairly infer that this day's devotions are the institution and appointment of God, and the fulfilment of this prophecy.

But while it brings to mind the sweetest recollections that can swell the bosom of the Christian, o animate the praises of heaven, it does not entirely shut out from his thoughts, or supersede the remembrance of the original work, which laid the foundation of the Sabbath. It still returns every *seventh* day, and reminds him that in six days God made heaven and earth, and then rested from all his work which he had created and made.

Seeing, then, the consummation of the work of creation is given as the reason for the institution of the Sabbath on the *seventh* day, and there has since been exhibited to the "morning stars" of heaven and the sons of men on earth, the completion of a far more glorious work on the morning of the *first*, the presumption is, that the day of commemoration has been transferred from the seventh to the first: especially as the original object of commemoration is still preserved, while by the change of day, a greater and more sublime object is introduced.

2. I infer the transfer of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, from the fact,

that there is *intimation of such a change in the Old Testament.* It certainly will be strong presumptive proof of the change, if under the very dispensation in which the holy rest was on the seventh, there be manifest indications of the appointment of another day. Such indications there are. Examine again Psalms 118:14,29. The Psalmist there represents the righteous, or the church, as rejoicing with gladness in their tabernacles, and opening the gates of righteousness that they might enter therein and praise the Lord. Hs adverts also to the ground of their rejoicing, the occasion of their praise, the mighty triumph of "him that cometh in the name of the Lord," to become salvation to the righteous. He further specifies a particular day on which the church rejoiced, and was exceeding glad, the day which the Lord hath made, and intimates that the appointment of this special day of praise originated in the fact, that the stone which the builders refused was become the head stone of the corner. This passage, by the authority of inspiration, is determined to have reference to the coming of Christ, and the establishment of the gospel dispensation. The phrase, "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord," is universally interpreted by the Jews in reference to the Messiah, and on the occasion of his entry into Jerusalem, you remember, the multitude applied it to Jesus Christ. The "stone which the builders refused" is emphatically descriptive of the rejection of Christ, is by the Apostles

attributed to him, and like the former phrase, under the old dispensation, has become synonymous with Jesus Christ.

And when did Jesus become the head stone of the corner? When did he become the salvation of the righteous? Was it not when he triumphed over every enemy, death, hell and the grave; when he was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, when for his humiliation unto death, he was exalted and constituted head over all things to the church, and had given to him a name above every name? Was it not on that bright morning when the grave surrendered its noble victim, and the darkness which had long hung over it was for ever dissipated, when the Son of God, strong with the power of Jehovah, burst asunder the fetters of the tomb, and stood forth the mighty conqueror, resplendent with the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person? On that morning, then, says the Psalmist, the voice of rejoicing and salvation will be in the tabernacles of the righteous. That is the day which the Lord hath made: they will rejoice and be glad in it. Yea, they will open the gates of the sanctuary, they will enter therein and praise the Lord, because his right hand hath done valiantly. The day of Christ's resurrection, then, or the first day of the week, seems to have been pointed out as the Sabbath, or season of social worship under the gospel, even by the pro-

phets of the former dispensation which is now waxed old and vanished away.

3. The change in the day of the Sabbath, may be *proved from an expression in Rev.* 1: 10. "I was in the spirit on the "*Lord's-day.*" The visions of John, recorded in this book, are generally supposed to have been about the close of the first century, in the 96th year of our Lord, or 63 after his death. It is plain therefore from John's use of the phrase, that not only he, but the churches to which he wrote, were at this time familiar with a certain day denominated the Lord's. That this was the first day of the week is universally admitted: for there is no apparent reason for such a distinction of any day but the first. This might naturally be so distinguished from the Lord's resurrection on that day. But where lies the force or propriety of the appellation? Is it not in the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ claimed a peculiar property in it, that he had set it apart for himself as Lord of the Sabbath, o be spent in commemoration of his magnificent work? What is understood by the Lord's Supper? Is it not that he has consecrated it as a memorial of his death, has sanctified it, or set it apart from a common to a sacred purpose? Then the Lord's-day is so, because he hath consecrated it to be a memorial of his resting from his new creation, of his accomplishment of a work, which more than any other will to all eternity magnify the perfections of Jehovah.

On this day, as the ancient Fathers of the first and second centuries testify,* the Christian church kept their Sabbath, and attended to those private meditations, and public observances which belonged to it as a holy rest. And although the apostles themselves, as well as the primitive Christians went often into the Synagogue on the Seventh day or Jewish Sabbath, they did it not because they felt the obligation of keeping that day, but in accommodation to the Jews, that by becoming all things to all men, they might be won over to the Christian religion, and be saved. But on the first they assembled together, as on a day which they recognized as set apart by their Lord for the religious duties of the Sabbath. What is especially to be noted on this passage is, that the apostle under the inspiration of God, authorizes the distinction of this day as the Lord's, and in so doing sanctions the religious commemoration of it as the Sabbath, which was the practice of his time.

4. We have not only the implied declaration of John on this point, but in proof of the change, we

* Ignatius, a companion of the apostles, says, "Let us no more Sabbatize, (*i. e.* keep the Jewish Sabbath,) but keep the *Lord's-day*, on which our *Life* arose."—Justin Martyr, who lived in the close of the first century: "On the day called *Sunday* is an assembly of all who live in the city or country; when the memoirs of the apostles, and writings of the prophets, are read."—Irenæus disciple of Polycarp, who studied with John the Evangelist: "On the *Lord's-day* every one of us Christians keeps the Sabbath, meditating on the law, and rejoicing in the works of God."

have the *example of the apostles for the sacred observance of the first day.*

On the evening of the day of his resurrection the disciples were together in one place, when the Lord himself appeared in their midst, and pronounced upon them his peaceful benediction. This itself might prove nothing. But farther on in the chapter, (John 20: 26.) you find that after eight days, or on the return of the same day, according to the Jewish mode of reckoning, they were together again, and a second time also visited and blessed by the Lord. This has the appearance of an intentional assembling on the first day of the week. On Pentecost, also, which at that time occurred on the first day, the disciples were all with one accord in one place.

The Apostle Paul was at none of these meetings, for he was not as yet converted. But you learn from the Acts and from Corinthians, that the churches planted by this apostle also observed the *first*, and not the seventh day of the week, as the Sabbath. When Paul came to Troas he tarried there seven days, and upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, he preached unto them. This is related in such a manner as to leave the impression, that the custom of the church was to meet on that day for religious ordinances. In writing to the Corinthians, the apostle directs them, as he says he had done the Galatians, on the *first day* of the week to lay by them, as the Lord had prospered, something for the

poor persecuted Christians at Jerusalem. There is no apparent reason why the first day should be selected for this contribution, if it were not the known and acknowledged custom of the churches to distinguish that day from all others, by some peculiar observances.

From all these recorded facts, then, it appears that both Jewish and Gentile converts kept the Sabbath on the first day of the week, under the authority, and in accordance with the example of the apostles: and that Paul, who received his revelations of truth and institutions immediately from the Lord, consecrated the same day with the other apostles, although he had no intercourse with them for three years after his conversion; and then they added nothing to him, or communicated no truths which he had not previously known from Christ himself. This agreement of apostles who had not consulted together on the subject, strongly indicates the will of their common Master. Nor can we suppose them without authority from on high, to have presumed to transfer the Sabbath from a day on which God had fixed it, and by their example, inculcate on the churches through all ages, the sanctification of a different day. This indisputable practice of the apostles carries along with it all the force of law, and announces in intelligible language that the day is changed.

5. The only remaining argument I shall adduce in proof of this point, is the *transfer* of the *blessing*

from the *seventh* to the *first day* of the week, or the Christian Sabbath. God not only sanctified, or set apart the holy rest of the Sabbath, but he also blessed it, or made it a source of blessings to those who observed it. Now, if the observance of the first day as a Sabbath, has been marked by the peculiar bestowment of mercies on the church; it will be a striking evidence that the change which is apparent since the days of the Apostles, has been introduced by the will of their Master. Otherwise God would be setting his seal to a human institution which has had the effect of abolishing his own.

And what is the fact? Which day of the seven has been most blessed? Was it not on the first that the risen Redeemer twice appeared in the midst of his waiting disciples, and spoke a word, which from his lips meant more than heart can conceive. Was it not on this same day, while the disciples were all together with one accord, that the Holy Spirit was poured out from on high, to enlighten their minds in gospel views, and qualify them for extensive usefulness in building up the kingdom of Jesus? Was it not on this blessed day, that under the preaching of Peter, three thousand souls were brought from darkness into light, introduced into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God, and made glad with anticipations of eternal bliss?

And what day, ever since, has been marked with the particular favor of heaven, and pointed out as the day on which he will meet with his people to

bless them? Is it not that on which Zion assembles; that on which the gates of righteousness are opened, that the Lord's people may rejoice and be glad in it? Oh! how has the heart of the Christian often been elevated to songs of praise while he sat under the droppings of the sanctuary, and could say with the Psalmist, "One day in the courts of the Lord is better than a thousand." And with the Poet,

"My willing soul could stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

How frequently has his soul longed, yea, even fainted for the courts of the Lord! and when the Sabbath came, often has he feasted on the word, and had an antepast of that endless Sabbath, where are

"No groans to mingle with the songs
Which warble from immortal tongues,
No rude alarms of raging foes,
No cares to break the long repose,
No midnight shade, no clouded sun,
But sacred, high, eternal noon."

And while attuning his heart to the praises of his Redeemer, he has almost thought himself seizing a golden harp in heaven, and joining with the chorus of the skies in their "Alleluia, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

And on this same day how many thousands have been born of the Spirit, and first found the name of Jesus precious; how many who are *now* in the sanctuary above; and how many more who shall finally swell the triumphs of heaven, wear the laurels of victory, the robes of righteousness, and be everlastingly blessed with the visions of God! On this holy day how often has there been joy in heaven over the repentance of returning prodigals who had long been absent from their father's house; how many have commenced a pilgrimage to the holy land above, and begun a song which angels delight to learn, and in which they will commingle with redeemed spirits through all eternity—"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

Since, then, on this day God hath granted the *blessing* annexed to the Sabbath, we may conclude that it is the day also which he hath sanctified or set apart to be the holy rest under the gospel dispensation.

On a review of the whole, we are led to a full persuasion that the *first* is now the day on which the Sabbath is to be remembered and kept holy, and that the change has taken place in conformity with the Divine pleasure.

If any are not convinced by the argument, let such conscientiously observe the seventh day, and not shuffle off all moral obligation in regard to a

Sabbath, because some pious persons do not see as we do. If they differ from us, they do it conscientiously, and maintain the observance of the seventh day. Let others who quarrel with us on the point of the sanctification of the first day, go and do like wise. Let them not destroy God's law and authority, and trample it under their feet, because all good people do not unite in sentiment on this subject, but let them rather take their Bibles and determine for themselves, which is the day, and observe it.

CHAPTER IV.

THE UTILITY OF THE SABBATH.

In conformity with the original plan, your attention has been directed to the divine institution, and the date of the Sabbath, its perpetual obligation, and the change of the day. On the last topic, in proof of the change, it was remarked that the superior glory of the work of redemption, rendering it highly probable that the perfections of God therein displayed, would lay the foundation for their future commemoration, and constitute a reason for appointing the day of its completion the Sabbath—the intimations of a change in the writings of the Prophets under the old dispensation itself—the application by John, of the expression, "the Lord's-day," to the first day of the week—the uniform example of the

apostles, which, in itself, is abundantly sufficient to establish it—and, finally, the transfer of the blessing from the seventh to the first day—all combined to confirm us in the full persuasion, that this is now the day on which God designs the holy rest unto himself to be remembered and kept holy. And now he speaks to us, saying, Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy: the first day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work, but in it thou shalt not do any work thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates: for on the first day of the week, did the Lord enter into his rest, having ceased from the work of redemption: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

The next general division of the subject now claiming attention, is the *utility of the Sabbath.* This is declared in the text. "The Sabbath was made for man"—for man universally, as has been shown; man in all circumstances and relations; in his private and his public character, individually and associatedly. And for the benefit of man also. It was set apart as a holy rest in accommodation to the constitution and nature of man, both corporeal and mental—as an animal, and as an immortal and accountable agent. All days belong to man as talents which he is to employ for his Master; but while six are given him that he may devote requisite

time to secular pursuits, this is set apart for his special benefit—for relief of body and mind, and the cultivation of holiness.

The utility of the Sabbath is manifest,

1. In the *respite* from *labor* which it affords both to *man and beast.* God, who made all things, best knows the precise nature of each, and has admirably displayed his wisdom in the adaptation of means to the end, and his kindness to all in evincing that his tender mercies are over all the works of his hands. He who gave to the laboring animals their powers and placed them in the circumstances in which they are, as the property of man, knew well how much labor they could healthfully and vigorously endure, and therefore early ordained for their relief, a cessation from work, one day in seven. And he that can lay claim to the character of a righteous man, will regard the life of his beast; and in so doing, if they have been employed the rest of the week, will grant them the respite on the Sabbath which their Creator allowed them.

It is found by experiment, that the life of working beasts is shortened, and their strength diminished by a continued course of labor. They actually require, in order to the maintenance of health and vigor, that the Sabbath should be a day of rest, on which they shall not be obliged to do any work. And its utility in this respect would be more apparent, if men more generally, were possessed of the tender

mercies of our heavenly Father, who is good and kind to all.

The same weekly relaxation from toil is required to sustain the animal powers of man, whether they have been exhausted by manual labor, or have been drained of their sap by the absorbing influence of mental effort.

Man is an active being, endued with powers which qualify him for employment, and point it out as his duty. And that individual who wastes his life in idleness has forgotten one end of his being, and robs himself of half the joy of life. But on the other hand, our native activity must be bounded by the limits which our Maker has fixed. If we pass them, we dispute his wisdom, contemn his benevolence, and pretend to a better acquaintance with the capabilities of our frame, than his who fashioned us in the womb, and instituted, in accordance with our nature, the weekly respite of the Sabbath. Every prudent, industrious laboring man knows that the work of six days is sufficiently exhausting to demand the rest of the seventh, and that to continue from day to day without a weekly cessation, would very soon impair his strength, and waste his life. Or if he does not know it, an experiment would very soon convince him that the Infinite Mind who ordained the Sabbath, has far more wisdom than he. The experiment has been made, and resulted as we might have anticipated, considering the character of God who made both man and the Sabbath.

And if those who are voluntarily employed in profitable industry, need the invigorating influence of the Sabbath, how much more do they, who are doomed to toil under the lash of cruel parents and hard masters? The Sabbath is the poor man's friend. It scatters joy and gladness over his path. To him it is the bursting of a bubbling fountain in the scorching desert—the green spot on earth's wilderness where his eye rests with pleasure, the rising of a star like that of Bethlehem, to point him to the place of peace!

On other days he may be cheerless, and perhaps alone; but on this, his eye sparkles with delight while he gazes on the little family circle, and his heart glows with new pleasure as he looks around upon the children whom God hath given him, and enjoys a day's communion with the wife of his bosom. Ye poor of the world! love the Sabbath; for it throws its arms around, and would protect you from the avaricious cravings of the rich.

2. Its utility is manifest, in its *promotion of cleanliness, health, and civility.*

Every one knows, that on the Sabbath, men are ashamed to appear in their usual dress, especially if they frequent the house of God. Almost without exception, therefore, you will find persons of all ages, and conditions of life, in possession of what is commonly termed "an every-day suit," and a "Sunday suit." There are multitudes who make no change of any part of their clothing, until the

eve or morn of the hallowed day; and how many whose skin undergoes no purifying process except on the approach of the Sabbath. You are all acquainted with the custom of mothers in washing their children on Saturday evening, and know how common it is in Summer, for almost all persons, especially laborers, to resort to a neighboring stream or pond of water, for the wholesome purpose of bathing.

But if there were no Sabbath, clothes might be worn until they were disgusting to the eye; if there were no respite from wearisome toil, and men were obliged to labor day after day without interruption, who can tell how often the multitude would deem it convenient to apply the purifying element to the porous skin? The Sabbath stands forth as a memento to every one, of the importance of cleanliness of person, and neatness of dress, and does more than any other instrumentality, to remove from evangelized nations that squalidness which characterizes savages.

Immediately connected with this consequence of the Sabbath, is its promotion of *health*. This it does by requiring a suspension of fatiguing toil, which must soon wear out the system: but the influence it exerts in this way, to which I now allude, is the result of the cleanliness it secures. One of the requisite means for the enjoyment of health, is the removal of all obstructions to a free perspiration. If the pores are not kept open by

frequent cleansing, but are left closed by the filth which will soon accumulate, the system is not in possession of its full power of healthful action, and cannot be expected either to operate so vigorously, or so enduringly. No one can tell, therefore, other things being equal, how much the health of this nation is promoted by the regular return of a weekly Sabbath.

Civility, or good manners, are also cultivated to a high degree, by the observance of this holy day. The very dress which men wear, has some influence in regulating their behavior. There seems to be in the eyes of all, an incongruity between the decent attire which they assume on that day, and indecency or impoliteness of manner. Even persons, who in a different dress might feel at liberty to transgress the laws of courteousness, when they themselves and all around are clad in clean and comely garments, seem to recognize these laws, and pay their deference to them.

The company, also, in which men are found on the Sabbath, (if they go at all to the house of worship,) the truths they hear, the associations of place and person, all conspire to the cultivation of refinement and decorum. As evil communications corrupt good manners, so do good associations and communications promote and establish them. As the memento of cleanliness, the hand-maid of health, the index to civility, the Sabbath proclaims its utility.

3. The Sabbath is useful, also, in *humbling the pride of men, and recalling to mind their native equality.* Different classes of society are recognized in the Bible, in pointing out the relative duties of masters and servants. Yet all that haughtiness of demeanor, and feeling of superiority, which are so apt to attach themselves to elevated rank, is absolutely forbidden: while kindness to all, and condescension to those beneath us in the walks of life, is strictly inculcated. And nothing, perhaps, is better adapted to encourage and promote an attention to the one, and a divorcement from the other, than an observance of the public duties of the Sabbath. In the house of worship, and even in the cessation from labor, men are made to feel, that God has equally regarded all, that they are alike made in his image, and alike invited to the provisions of the gospel. Here, the lesson is emphatically impressed, that no distinctions of wealth, honor, or learning, will, in themselves, render men more acceptable to God, or more worthy of his regards, and that man's truest dignity consists in wearing the image of Jehovah, and being assimilated to him in holiness.

Here, the only dignifying and really valuable distinction of the mass of mankind, is that which originates in the possession of true piety. Hence the man who is resplendent with worldly honor, or clothed in scarlet and purple every day, feasting extravagantly on the bounties of Providence, and lifting himself up with pride and self-importance

because of his adventitious circumstances, may often look around him in the sanctuary, and see one and another far below him in earthly condition, yea, perhaps among his own dependants, who, in the sight of God, is of great price, and exalted to heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He may see in a Lazarus, an heir of glory, a resident of the skies, a man high in honor with God, because of his moral qualities, while he himself, elevated though he be in worldly pomp and grandeur, is actually sunk far beneath him in everything which is durably good, and lastingly distinctive. But for the influence of the Sabbath, then, we might expect to see the aristocracy of wealth and power marching with far more rapid stride to complete dominion, than it now does, and laying its subjugating and enslaving hand on the laboring and dependent classes of men.

4. The utility of the Sabbath is further apparent, in the *opportunity which it affords to man for reflection on his duty and destiny.* It will be granted by all, that this is but the portico of man's existence, the germ of his future being—that he is endued with capacities of knowledge and enjoyment, which assimilate him to angels, and even to God himself—that he is destined to employ those powers, either in everlasting obedience and love, or in eternal disobedience, malevolence and wo, accordingly as they have been directed here to the glory of God, or debased in the worship of self, and service of sin—and, herefore, that it is infinitely important for every

child of Adam, to wake up in his mind reflections on his present spiritual condition, and future prospects. There are things belonging to our peace, which shall be for ever hid from our eyes, unless we employ the passing moments of time, in solemn pondering over them, and frequent seeking after them.

But during the rest of the week, mankind are so engrossed in business and pleasure, so overwhelmed in worldly occupations, so devoted to secular plans for accumulating what they shall eat, what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed, that if no silent Sabbath intervened to remind them, by its solemn stillness, of the quiet of the tomb, and the unknown vast of eternity, they would forget altogether that this life is not their home, and that they here act in reference to a future world. On this sacred day, however, the mind, which has for six days been wholly buried in the world, is directed to some reflections on its accountability, and its crimes. And although it be not religiously observed, yet will its holy light often blaze upon the soul of the sinner, overwhelm him with conviction of guilt, stop him in his path of sin, point him to the courts of the Lord's house, and restrain him from the indulgence of his unholy propensities, and wayward dispositions.

And to the Christian, whose time and thoughts have been necessarily much occupied with the cares of the world, how welcome is the day of rest, when

he can lay aside his ordinary employments, and spend his hours in meditating on the law of God, and the hopes of the believer in Christ! It comes over him like a gale, bearing on its bosom the hallowing peace of heaven. It descends upon him weekly, like the dew of Hermon, even the dew that descended on the mountains of Zion; where the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. It meets him like a returning angel of mercy, whose visits are far enough between, and who comes from the everlasting hills with life and immortality in his hands.—Precious day! may thy light never leave us—thine influences never depart—thy glory never fade!

5. The utility of the Sabbath is manifest, again, in the *opportunity it affords for moral and religious instruction, and the diffusion of useful knowledge.* The value of instruction, both to the individual, the community, and the nation, will be recognized by all. And of all instruction, that is best which is most meliorating to the heart, and of most practical utility in life. Such is the instruction which is peculiarly imparted on the Sabbath. It is that which discloses duty, and has a direct bearing on the interests of all. On this day, the Bible is opened in the pulpit, and the living teacher expounds its truths to the people, and addresses them in their practical influences to the conscience. And by this means, with almost no expense, there is communicated to

the mass of people, a greater amount of valuable knowledge than can be estimated.

But leaving the pulpit, go into the domestic sanctuary, and witness there a scene which has sent gladness into many a heart, and has done more for the morality of this nation, than all her public schools, or legal enactments. See the father of a family, the paternal shepherd, gathering his little flock around him, making them to lie down in green pastures, and beside the still waters. See him in the midst of those whom his heart loves, open the sacred pages, and call their attention to the story of Joseph, and the goodness of Joseph's God—then point them to the babe of Bethlehem, the man of sorrows, the persecuted and dying, yet meek, submissive and benevolent Jesus; and while he tells them that their sins were the nails and the spear, which fastened him to the cross, and opened the veins of his body; that he left heaven to die thus for them, you may see one and another catching his words with listening ear, and weeping tears of sympathy. Yes; and you may follow them out into the shadows and realities of life, and you will find that an impression has been made by the familiar instruction of the fireside, which has restrained them from the haunts of wickedness, and probably led them into the church of God. Or if one wanderer hath forgotten the pious lessons of his childhood, in the gay follies of youth, often in the energy of manhood, or on the verge of old age, will they steal upon his ear like

the whisperings of spirits, and wake him up from his long dream of forgetfulness. And if not, on his dying bed he will confess, that often in his wayward course, did the shadow of his godly father flit before him, or the voice of his pious mother reach his heart, and throw a momentary check over his visions of folly, and his schemes of crime.

The Sabbath certainly operates most beneficially in presenting a suitable occasion to parents, for training up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. During the days of business, they are not so much at leisure to assemble their families around them; nor are children generally so much disposed to attend to pious instruction on any other day. Their minds are then preoccupied with their plays, and objects of pleasure. But on the holy day which they have been taught to remember, on which they see all work suspended, and the Bible and religious books placed on the table, they are prepared to hear and to feel. And as parents value their children's souls, and their country's prosperity, let them not neglect on the Sabbath day, to gather their family about them, and in the use of some familiar and approved catechism, or from the fountain itself, infuse into their tender minds, the great facts and principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I remarked also, that the Sabbath opened the way for an extensive *diffusion* of useful knowledge. I had in view especially, the Sabbath School.

If there were no Sabbath, there would be no

Sabbath School. And the express object of this institution, is to inculcate on the minds of youth, the high value, and absolute importance of holiness, which will not only ripen them for heaven, but render them peaceful, industrious, and civil members of society, and also open up to them individually, springs of enjoyment, which are concealed from the world. Oh! how many a poor little wanderer in this wide wilderness, cast out in desolate penury, has been taken up by some devoted Sabbath School Teacher, led to this nursery of godliness, made rich in the treasures of heaven, and become an ornament to the community in which he moved; or perhaps, as a messenger of the cross, planted his banner on the far hills of some heathen land! And how many thousands are here receiving instruction, and growing up for usefulness, who otherwise had died in ignorance, sloth, and crime.

There is still another light in which this subject ought to be contemplated. By means of the Sabbath School there are circulated extensively, books and tracts of an interesting and profitable character, which are not only read by the children, but often attract the attention of parents themselves, and have in many instances become an arrow of conviction, and an instrument of regeneration. No one can tell how much of the most practically useful knowledge is thus diffused through society, and how much of the moral conduct of men is attributable to this cause But were there no Sabbath, and of course

no Sabbath School, all this moral power would be lost, and the remainder might be unequal to the task of sustaining the weight of corruption and ruin which is balanced against it. The Sabbath, then, is pre-eminently useful as a mean of diffusing truth, and impressing it on the mind.

6. Finally, the utility of the Sabbath is apparent in its *moral efficacy in preserving the worship of the true God, and sustaining a sense of accountability.* You may walk over the length and breadth of any land, where the Sabbath and all its precious and reforming influences have never been known, and your eye will meet no pure worshipper of the living Jehovah; and you may plant your foot on the portal of no temple dedicated to the service of the Eternal and Holy One. But instead, you will everywhere find the deluded multitude bowing their knees to the workmanship of their own hands, having changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. And if you follow them to their fanes, you witness, most probably, the defiling worship of a prostitute goddess.

Or you may go to those who have lived under the light of Gospel truth, but have no regard for the Sabbath of God, and their conceptions of the Deity are such, (if they are not actual Atheists,) as leave them entirely irresponsible for their conduct, and sweep away from their minds all sense of accountability to God. Look at infidel France, when she

strikes out of her statute-book the weekly Sabbath and substitutes the Decade. She has the countenance and the mien of a maniac, and seems rushing to her own ruin, and looking fury in the face of her best friends. She cries night and day up and down the streets, "There is no God," and pays her formal devotions to the substituted goddess of Reason. She lights up a fire and burns the Bible, or for the amusement of the people and the gratification of her maniacal and fiendish spirit, ties it to the tail of an ass, and parades it through the market-places. She drives her horses and cattle into the house of God, swears there is no immortality, and that death is an eternal sleep; wishes she might imbrue her hands in the blood of the Redeemer, talks with Satanic malevolence of the delight it would have given her to drive the nails, and thrust the spear, and builds her thousand altars to be stained with the blood of millions of human victims. And when she has accomplished her purpose, and stripped herself of her glory, she goes out naked, to die unblest and unlamented, without a mourner to follow her to the tomb. And let those who would abolish the Sabbath, or lessen its sanctity in the eyes of men, go and sit upon her grave, and ponder well the course she took, and the end to which it conducted her. Let them go and call up her spirit from the shades of the sepulchre, and inquire of it whether the observance of the Sabbath is not the safeguard of liberty and religion; and whether its neglect is not

paving the way for the introduction of infidelity and scepticism, and the loss of individual and national accountability, and with tears of blood she will answer in the affirmative, and solemnly warn you not to tread in her steps.

And let it not be thought that the Bible is sufficient in itself, without the Sabbath, to prevent these consequences, and diffuse a wholesome moral principle. It is not. Without the energies of this holy rest, it could make little impression on the stony heart of man. And therefore God appoints the Sabbath and the ministry of reconciliation in union with it, that he may summon up the attention of men to its important and essential lessons. No; without the sanctity of this precious day, the Bible and all other moral influences would fade away, and die from off the earth. They would be but a "broken reed at best" before the mighty strength of unrestrained corruption. Law and gospel would both be forgotten, and the moral government of Jehovah be trodden under foot.

And in confirmation of this assertion, you may look to cities and towns in your own land, where the Sabbath is little regarded, and you see God dishonored, his name wantonly profaned, and all his laws set at nought. And just in proportion as this day is desecrated, will the knowledge and worship of the true God fail from the mind, the moral sense of the nation be impaired, its power decay, its foundations be destroyed, and its pillars fall. And then

it will stand forth a monument of the wisdom of God, and the folly of man; and it will hold up to the light, the too much forgotten farewell sentiment of the Father of this country, that "national morality cannot prevail in exclusion of religious principle." And we may add, that religious principle will not pervade a community, in exclusion of the Sabbath, which is the only sufficiently general, impressive, and popular medium of inculcating it.

REFLECTIONS.

1. I might call your attention to many reflections arising from this subject; as the gratitude with which the Sabbath should be received and observed, the enormity of the sin of its profanation, the importance of faithfully performing its public and private duties; but I shall omit these, and state, as the *first* inference, the *importance of a strict regard for the Sabbath in civil rulers, and legislative assemblies.*

Men in the high places of power are prone to forget their responsibility to God; and so dizzied are they by their splendid elevation, that they seem to look upon themselves as rightfully exempted from present obligation. Yea, it is too common for them to glory in their shame, to boast of their exemption from puritanical severity, and superstitious bigotry, and to think highly of themselves, because when at Rome, they can do as Rome does, and rise above the stricter practices, and holier feelings of home.

But how they actually demean themselves by such a course, in the eyes of all reflecting and judicious persons! Oh! that they felt how much is committed to them, how their acts tell upon the nation, and send down into every corner of the land, either life or death! And do they not know, that by all their crimes, and especially by the breach of the Sabbath, they are robbing this peaceful land of its only hope? Are they not aware that by converting the Lord's-day into a mere holiday, and by their example encouraging its profanation, they are opening up the sluices of depravity, infusing poison into the vitals of the Republic, and scattering fire-brands and death among the people? Do they not know that whenever this organ of the Divine administration is impaired, the moral government of God loses its influence over the minds of men, and leaves them to misrule and confusion? Oh! that they were wise, that they understood this! And oh! that I could whisper into their ears, that at some future day their children may rise up and call them accursed, for stealing away from them the moral efficacy of religious institutions, and with it the peace and order, the liberty and joy, of a happy government!

When rulers sin, the land mourns. When they break the Sabbath, they pursue a miserable policy, they weaken the bonds of society, break in sunder the strong cords of religious obligation, and leave us nothing to bind the passions of the human heart, save the brittle thread of civil law, which, unsup-

ported by the moral restraints of religious institutions, is weaker before them than the shadows of night before the rising sun.

With a slight alteration, the language of another on a different subject may be adapted to that before us. "The hand that lays its polluting touch on the altars of God, and undermines the foundations of the Sabbath, is the hand of death unbarring the gates of Pandemonium, and letting loose upon our land the crimes and the miseries of hell. And even if the Most High should stand aloof, (which he will not,) and cast not a single ingredient into our cup of trembling, it would seem to be full of superlative wo." Then let our rulers, as they regard the authority of the Lord of Sabaoth, as they would be the real benefactors and guardians of their country, as they value the best interests of posterity, and the happiness of the world, withhold themselves from a profanation of God's day, and by a moral example diffuse over this nation the wholesome restraints, and gladdening influences of the Divine government. Then will the people rise up and call them blessed.

2. Let every man who would lay claim to *patriotism* and be thought a *good member of civil society*, keep back his foot from polluting the Sabbath.

It is manifest, from the preceding remarks, that the Sabbath-breaker strikes at the root of all that is peaceful and orderly, and opens the way for the

spread of irreligion, infidelity, and moral death. The man who by his example weakens the pervading sense of obligation to God, and overthrows the authority of a Divine institution, does so much toward the ruin of his country, and is one of its worst enemies. He may not feel himself to be so, but he is so in reality.

We can little regard a man's boasts of patriotism, his fourth of July orations, his flaming toasts, his shouldering of his musket on public days, when we see him regardless of the laws of God, and by an immoral example sapping the foundations of republican government. He is no patriot at heart. For the real friend of his country will avoid every course which is manifestly ruinous to its interests, and will uphold every institution which is promotive of its welfare. And what more so than the Sabbath?

And here recall the noble sentiments of the venerated Washington. "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician equally with the pious man, ought to respect and cherish them." Would that his mantle had dropped upon the world, and were now worn by his children in this land!

I repeat it, it is vanity for that man to lay claim o the tribute of patriotism, who by his example and

influence in reference to the Sabbath, is subverting religion and morality, those great pillars of human happiness. He may have much of the milk of human kindness, may possess the sweet charities of life, may be amiable, and admired for his talents and usefulness in other respects, yet if he break the fourth commandment, and teach men so, he shall not only be of no esteem in the kingdom of heaven, but is certainly laying the axe at the root of his country's brightest hopes.

3. A third inference is, that they who are *anxious for the preservation of the Sabbath from desecration*, and whose anxiety has waked them up to petition the councils of the nation to withdraw governmental example and sanction from polluting this holy day, so far from being the enemies of their country's liberty, are *decidedly her best friends;* consulting for her welfare in the fear of God, and in accordance with the lessons of experience.

It is true, they have been denounced as a combination of priests, aiming at the overthrow of our civil, and the establishment of ecclesiastical government; they have been cried down as guilty of high treason against the commonwealth, and have been branded with the infamy of scheming for revolution; but the meanwhile in their innocence and integrity have they been weeping between the porch and the altar, because men forsake the law of God, and pave the way for the uprooting of their fair inheritance from their pious fathers. They know that

republican government cannot exist without the pervasion of moral principle secured by the Sabbath. And they know also that the gospel with its institutions, is the only thorough reformer, that where its truths are unknown, its motives unfelt, its high sanctions unrealized, there will assuredly be the death of all that is purifying and peaceful.

Who are now the profane, the debauched, the noisy, the riotous, the friends of theatres, of races, of masquerades, of public balls, of duelling? Are they not precisely those who are irreligious, and contemners of gospel institutions?

And on what do these political dreamers found their hopes of seeing this nation a century hence the fairest and happiest land on God's footstool? Is it on our facilities of trade and commerce, on our productive soil, our growing population, our free institutions, our unshackled press? But do they not know that all these things are only the elements of a greater conflagration, if the kindling flame be not extinguished by pouring out upon it the waters of life; if the foundations be not strengthened by the firm props of religious and moral principle?

Friends of your country, awake! put on the armor of the gospel, shine forth in the splendor of whatsoever things are pure, honest, lovely, and of good report, and put forth the strong arm of prayer to uphold the Sabbath.

4. Finally. Let us inquire, how have we ob-

served the Sabbath? What is our example, what our influence? Are we venerators of the institutions of God, or can we lightly esteem the obligations, and wantonly break the laws of the Gospel?

CHAPTER V.

THE DUTIES OF THE SABBATH.

This chapter will embrace the final topic,—the *duties of the Sabbath.*

Dr. Paley has remarked, that "if the Sabbath be binding on Christians, it must be so, as to the day the duties, and the penalty."

In reference to the day, there can be no doubt that whenever it is pointed out by Divine authority, it is equally obligatory with the rest itself. But that the day originally fixed, must be immutably binding, can certainly never be contended. That part of a moral or immutable law, which is only circumstantial or ceremonial, may be changed at any time by the will of the Supreme Legislator. If the original day never has been altered by the proper authority, then it is assuredly binding. But if the evidence adduced for a change be satisfactory, then the new day becomes as obligatory as the original one under the former dispensation.

As to the *penalty*, it must be known to all familiar with the Bible, that under the old dispensation, in

which God sustained the relation of civil Ruler, as well as Jehovah to be worshipped, there were annexed civil penalties even to moral statutes. Hence an idolater, who disobeyed the first and second commandments of the Decalogue, and a child who disobeyed the fifth, were both put to death; as was also the Sabbath-breaker, by a public stoning. If, then, the merely civil penalty be binding equally with the law of the Sabbath itself, and the one cannot exist without the other; neither can the worship of God, and obedience to parents, (moral duties,) be binding, without the annexed penalty of death. But who would argue thus? The truth is, that these severe penalties attached to certain moral laws, were entirely of a political nature, and originated in the civil relations which the Jewish people sustained to God as their Governor. These relations to that peculiar people being now dissolved, all the laws and penalties which grew out of them, are of course no longer obligatory, while they cannot at all affect the immutable nature of moral precepts. The everlasting penalty, however, which is in all cases the ultimate and principal, is now, as ever, binding on every impenitent Sabbath-breaker, or violator of any of God's moral statutes.

The *duties* of the Sabbath, it is contended, remain untouched, and still binding, as pointed out in the law, the prophets, and the gospel. These are, in fact, the law itself, and this we have found to be perpetually and universally obligatory. They are

no circumstantial part of the law, are enforced by the example of God himself, made equally binding on all in the fourth commandment, and nowhere rescinded in the New Testament, either by the direct precept, or example of our Lord or his apostles.

To these duties, therefore, as indicated in the law itself, and in the interpretations of the prophets, the Master, and the apostles, we shall now direct our attention, and consider them under the two general heads of *rest from the lawful engagements of other days, and devotion to religious services.*

1. *Rest from lawful engagements of other days.* I make use of the term lawful, because no one would suppose universally sinful conduct to be permitted on the Sabbath, and also to intimate that such is the peculiar sanctity of the day, as to render unlawful, employments which at other times are absolute duties.

This proposition, which determines the negative duties of the Sabbath, is evidently founded on the law itself, which reads, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." Here every member of every family, is absolutely prohibited from being employed in any work which is not either demanded by the constitution of human nature, and the relations of the human family, or connected with the worship of God. That these

limitations are to be put on the general prohibitory term "*any*," might be easily shown by an appeal to the authorized interpretations of the precept, and may be inferred from part of the law itself. It is written, six days shalt thou labor and do *all* thy work. It is manifest that the word "all" in this clause, does not include the appropriate works of the Sabbath, those of compassion, and those belonging to the service of God, and command *all* these to be done in the six days, but requires the completion of our *secular* employments before the arrival of the Sabbath. Any of these works, therefore, *all of which* are to be done in six days, may not be performed on the Sabbath.

There is the same exclusion of secular business, and obligation of withholding from it in the original institution, when God *sanctified* the Sabbath. The sanctification of days, as all familiar with the Bible know, can only mean the distinguishing them from others for sacred purposes. But how is the Sabbath thus distinguished, unless men on that day are required to rest from that pursuit of business, and those secular occupations, which are appropriate on other days?

Other interpretations of the law, (and surely every legislator is at liberty to interpret his own laws,) scattered through Exodus, Nehemiah, and the Prophets, make it certain that every kind of secular engagement, exclusively of the limitations specified, is prohibited on the Sabbath. The gathering of

manna for food, of wood for fuel, of grain or hay in harvest, the sowing of seed, the bearing of burdens, every species of trade, and all kinds of work which require laboring animals; for these are entitled to the rest on the authority of God.*

There is in Isaiah 58:13, a passage which embraces in a few words, a summary exposition of that part of the law, which requires abstinence from the ordinary employments of the week. It consists in "not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words." Six days are ours in distinction from the seventh, which God calls his own, because on those days we are permitted to give our attention to what is necessary for our temporal well-being and comfort. Our "own ways," therefore, are not those which are at all times sinful, but those lawful ways which we pursue by God's authority six days of the week. These are to be suspended on the Sabbath, that we may devote ourselves to those ways which are God's distinctively from our own.

This branch of the subject, then, may be embraced in a *resting from thoughts, conversation, and action which are secular in their character, and lawful on other days of the week.*

1. *Secular or worldly thoughts.* Although this may not be directly specified, no one can doubt that

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* See Exod. 16:22—30. 23:12. 34:21. 35:2,3. Num. 15:32–36. Neh. 10:31. 13:15—22. Jer. 17:19—27. Amos 8:5—10.

it is intended. If a man be occupied during the day in thoughts on his business, his plans of accumulating wealth, his means and prospects of earthly enjoyment, he is evidently finding his own pleasure, and he only wants a release from the restraints of law, in order to his acting out his thoughts. God looketh at the heart, and therefore worldly desires, carnal affections, and secular schemes, occupying the mind on the Sabbath, must be, in his view, as far as the individual himself is concerned, a direct violation of the command enjoining rest from lawful occupations of other days.

2. *Worldly conversation.* This is expressly forbidden. "Not speaking thine own words." But how awfully is this part of the requirement forgotten! Politicians hesitate not to meet in the tavern, or at the corner, to scan the merits of respective candidates, to calculate probabilities of success, and enter into warm debate on points of character or policy. The merchant discourses on the prices of goods, the present demand and supply, and the profits of various articles. The lawyer calls some brother of the profession into his office, and together they argue some disputed point of law, or some anticipated case of the next court. The farmer talks of the weather, the poor corn, the good wheat of the year, and the expected rises and falls in the market. The devotees of fashion can tell you of every new bonnet, and every tawdry dress, and almost religiously some will descant on the folly and pride of

the wearers of tinkling ornaments, chains, and bracelets, and rings, and jewels, of mantles, and hoods, and veils. Others admire the eloquence of the preacher, the ease and gracefulness of his delivery, or the purity and perspicuity, or beauty and force of the style. And others again, after public service, assemble in little neighborly groups, not to praise God, and cultivate holy feelings and practical godliness, but to judge their fellows, measure all by their own rule, attribute motives which are not apparent, and find fault with those who, perhaps are better Christians than themselves.

This post requires all our watchfulness. It is weak and much exposed to the attacks of the enemy. How easily do the people of God fail here! How imperceptibly do they slide into conversation on the mere circumstances of religion, and then fall into the common talk of the world! Beware of speaking thine own words on the holy Sabbath, lest the spiritual duties and enjoyments of the day, finally become a weariness, and the hopes of the Christian forsake thee for ever.

3. *Rest from worldly actions*, or the employments of business and pleasure, is required as a duty of the day. That public business should be suspended shops shut, farming implements laid aside, schools closed, courts and legislatures adjourned, and public worship, if possible, attended, seems to be pretty generally acknowledged. Yet there are many who think it no harm to take a walk or ride for pleasure

to stroll about the streets, assemble at corners, spend their hours in the garden admiring the flowers, (not piously,) or range the farm to examine the fences, and only put up a rail if it have fallen out of place, or to watch the growth of their fruit trees, and calculate the quantity of their apples. Others deem it no violation of the command, to receive and answer letters of any description, to read political newspapers, or scientific, literary, and fictitious works, to cast up their accounts, and make arrangements for the morrow, to sit in their offices and read Blackstone, or weigh the evidence on some pending cause, or if they be physicians, to take up a late number of the Medical Recorder, and lie in bed late in the morning, that the rest of the day may be *necessarily* employed in visiting patients, or if they be farmers, much occupied in putting in their seed, or gathering their harvest, to postpone sending for the doctor to prescribe for a wife or daughter who has been sick all week, until they have filled up their own time, and can rob God of his, and the physician of his right, by calling him away on the Sabbath. Then they lose no work, and quiet conscience with a good excuse for violating the holy rest.

Others take it to be a very convenient day for visiting friends, and spending a few hours with them, when they need not be at the trouble of dressing on purpose, nor take any time from their daily employments in the family.

But I wish particularly under this head to exam-

ine some of the more plausible breaches of the Sabbath, and show how ill-founded are the excuses which are offered in support of them. If these cannot be sustained, much less those violations which are ordinary.

First, I shall notice the conduct of attorneys and judges in going to court. The excuse is, that the session commences on Monday, and they are engaged in causes which require an early attendance, or they may lose employment by not being present on the morning of the first day.

It may be replied, that no law of their country can either require or authorize them, to infringe on the laws and rights of Jehovah. If courts must commence on Monday, (for which there is no necessity,) then, in cases where it would be impossible to arrive sufficiently early by setting off at day-light, it becomes a duty to leave home on Saturday, and proceed either a part or the whole of the way. But here self intervenes, and pleads a trifle more of expense which it cannot afford, or a family with whom it would be pleasant to remain a day longer, or some business at home that may be lost by leaving on Saturday. In regard to the expense which might accrue from an additional day's absence, by leaving home on Saturday, it would in few cases amount to anything. For where boarding is wanted during a week or two, one day seldom makes any difference in the charge. And even if the expense were something more, it would be a trifling excuse

for a breach of God's law, an excuse which would blush to appear in the light of Christ's judgment throne.

The pleasure of being longer present with a family, also, and the probability of securing some business by remaining at home on Saturday, are both excuses which arise from seeking our own things in preference to the things of Jesus Christ, the honor of God's law, and the best interests of the community. The authority of Jehovah is paramount. It pervades all classes and all relations. It requires of legislators so to frame their laws, as not to interfere with the rights of the Supreme Judge of the nations, and of lawyers to keep their feet from polluting the Sabbath, and beware of treading on this holy ground with unholy step. It has, also, so linked together duty and interest, that no one who conscientiously obeys, will ever be the loser.

A second mode of interfering with the prohibitory clause of the law requiring rest from secular engagements lawful on other days, is that which some people adopt in making a delay at a place of public worship during the services, and then proceeding on their journey, quieting every monition of conscience by the past services of the sanctuary. I have known persons to be off early on the Sabbath morning with the intention of riding twelve or fifteen miles to some town or country congregation, tarrying there long enough to hear a sermon, and have themselves and horses refreshed, then advancing as many more

miles. Thus they will have accomplished a pretty good day's journey, and very piously have kept the Sabbath also. This is sometimes done when there is preaching in the place where they lodged on Saturday night, or somewhere near it, yet to carnal reasoning it will appear that they may hear as good a sermon, and perhaps better, ten or fifteen miles on the way; and therefore it will be perfectly justifiable to proceed with this in prospect.

"But if there be no preaching convenient to our Saturday night lodging, may we not as profitably travel, and meditate by the way, as tarry where we are?" I answer, no; and shall give the reasons under a succeeding head.

Others have some farm, or factory, or forge, or furnace, fifteen or twenty miles off, at which they wish to be, early on Monday morning. The best way of accomplishing it, will be to leave home on Sabbath morning, (although they might have heard preaching there,) ride half way, less or more, to the house of God, which happens to be on the road, and either abide there with some friends, or if there be a prayer-meeting, or any religious exercises, a few miles farther on, conclude to embrace the privilege of being present: and now they are within sight of their farm or factory, or it may be on the very spot. Yet they endeavor to persuade themselves that they have kept the Sabbath holy, while their primary purpose was to accommodate its sacred hours to the attainment of a secular object. All these modes of

unsanctifying God's Sabbath, and that by professors of religion, are stealing away his rights, robbing him of his own peculiar time, undermining the foundations of his government, causing his law to pass away, searing the conscience, hardening the heart, throwing off obligations, and adopting the moral precepts of God as the standard of duty only so far as to us seemeth expedient.

A third species of travelling which is not resting according to the commandment, is *that which is done in stages, canal and steam-boats*, whether on business, or for pleasure. The two former are absolutely forbidden in the commandment, where it is said that cattle, including all laboring animals, shall not be obliged to do any work. In using them, therefore, on the Sabbath, except to go where a work of mercy to ourselves or others calls us, is depriving them of rights which God has given them, and directly infringing on his law.

Those proprietors of stages who are every Sabbath driving their horses, sinning themselves and helping others to sin, are consequently treasuring up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. It will be no excuse at the bar of God, that they have been doing it in accommodation to a sinful government, or to the wishes of others, who will find their own pleasure. We are never at liberty to be partakers in sin, by affording it any encouragement. Government, also, is directly violating the moral

of God, by authorizing the carrying of the mail. This is manifestly secular business, and cannot be pleaded as a case of merciful necessity, nor even proved to be ultimately expedient.

And those who travel in their stages on the day of holy rest, under any pretences other than such as the Lord of the Sabbath has specified as valid, are doing their own ways, and pursuing courses of business or pleasure interdicted by the authority of God. The very fact of permitting themselves to be drawn by horses, although not their property, is a violation of the letter of the law. These animals are in their employ, as much as if they had expressly hired them for their own use; and for the time being must be viewed as their animals, in the comprehensive meaning of the statute, and put to labor at their request, or to serve their purposes.

But let us examine some of the more plausible reasons adduced in justification of such travelling. Generally they who are disposed to excuse themselves for travelling when on the way, would not hesitate in pronouncing it wrong to "set out" on the Sabbath. Yet I have heard those who professed a regard for God and his law, justify themselves even in this, by saying, that "they had long been looking for company, and could find none until the Sabbath, and they thought it best to embrace the opportunity."

It is manifest in this case, that there is no providential call of mercy, or the individuals could not

have waited. It is a case, therefore, of travelling on business, or on a visit of pleasure, either to or from home.

But where will those persons discover their authority for doing their own ways, or finding their own pleasure on God's holy day, because they happen to meet with company just at that time? Nowhere. On the contrary, neither their company, nor themselves, are at liberty thus to violate a law of God. And if they be professors, they aggravate their sin by exhibiting before the passengers an example which is not letting their light shine, but putting it under a bushel. In such cases, also, it will generally be found that there was not that diligent search for company until about the time of the Sabbath, which would have evinced a regard for God's law, nor that tenderness of conscience, that "pain to feel sin near," which would have induced them to sacrifice the present opportunity of doing their pleasure, and depend on God for another, rather than violate his holy and good commandment, and waste one of his own days in worse than idleness.

The more formidable excuses, however, are those which are advanced in justification of continued travelling when on a journey.

"One man is removing with his family to some distance, and is under the necessity of proceeding as economically as possible. To stop every Sabbath would be more than he could well afford." If he can afford to journey at all, he can afford to do

it without violating the statutes of Heaven. And I have yet to learn that it is the more economical course to offend God. Blessed is the man that *feareth alway*, and that *greatly delighteth* in the commandments of the Lord. Besides, persons in these circumstances, can so arrange about setting off, if thus disposed, as to make it convenient to be on Saturday evening, at a suitable place for spending the Sabbath. And it is a question whether they would not gain time in the end, by allowing themselves and their beasts the prescribed rest.

"Another has been absent from his family for some time, and thinks it best to hasten home." Let such ask themselves whether *urgent business* in the city would not have detained them a day or two, with all their anxiety to see home. But what comparison is there between the claims of business and the claims of God? What duty or what interest so urgent as the duty and interest of obedience to Divine law? The path of obedience is the path of safety, and we may confidently intrust our families to the care of God, while we are absent in the performance of duty.

"A third believes he can sanctify the Sabbath in travelling, by serious meditations, as well as at home, or in 'lying by.'" But he cannot. If the whole day were occupied in religious reflections, he would not be sanctifying the Sabbath. He would sanctify his heart, or his thoughts, but not the *day*. Its sanctification does not consist wholly in cultiva-

ting heavenly feelings, and cherishing spiritual thoughts. These we may have on other days, and on some particular day may devote the whole of our time to pious reflections, and yet this would not constitute that day the Sabbath. We must not employ our beasts, must abstain from the occupation of the rest of the week, and distinguish the day from all others by its own peculiarities, or we do not sanctify it, however pious our meditations in travelling. But it will generally be found that there is little of meditation by those who profane God's day. And if an occupancy in serious thoughts on the Sabbath while travelling, is sufficient to wipe away all the sin, then the seamstress may sit at her working table, and the farmer may follow his plough, and yet not violate the holy rest.

"A fourth thinks it better, since he is on his way, to pass on quietly, and not attract notice by leaving his fellow passengers." But what reason has he for thinking it better? It cannot be better for himself; for in a stage he can have few pious thoughts, and if he have any tenderness of conscience, his soul will be harrowed up within him. It cannot be better for his companions. They might have been summoned to consideration by the singular fact of his interrupting his journey out of regard for God; but now they are encouraged in sin by his example, and would place little value on anything of a religious nature which he might be disposed to say. There is at the bottom of this, however, a light

estimation of God's law, and a sinful shame of being thought a strict Christian, or enduring ridicule because of it.

"A fifth is on Saturday night within a half day's journey of home, and therefore concludes he will be justified in proceeding and being with his family and friends the remainder of the Sabbath."

On this excuse I remark, that the individual making it, might so have arranged the time of his departure on his homeward journey, as to arrive there on Saturday; or by delaying a day, he might have rid himself of the conscience-hushing apology, by throwing *a day and an half* between him and home, which would have removed all the point of the temptation.

And there are other reasons which neutralize this excuse. His return will interfere with the quiet devotions of his family, and prevent their enjoyment of the day as a Sabbath, by presenting unsuitable subjects of conversation. Another, also, would have as much right to determine that *three fourths* of the day might be thus spent, as he to fix it at one half. Neither of them having a right to dispose of an hour of it otherwise than as God has ordained.

"A sixth, and the only other I shall notice, considers himself indisputably entitled to proceed, if he happen, on Saturday night, to stop in a place where there is no public worship, and at a house in which there is much noise and confusion."

Persons travelling generally know where they are

going, and are somewhat acquainted with towns and taverns on the road. If they were desirous, therefore, of avoiding a breach of the Sabbath, they could make it extremely convenient to be at certain places on the Lord's day, where the privileges of the sanctuary would be afforded them. But the supposition is, that there is no public worship in the place. What then? Why, if there be any near, go to it: if not, you are in the situation of the sick man, who is providentially placed in circumstances which prevent an attendance at the house of God. Neither he nor you is required to attend as you are situated. Yet is neither of you exempt from the other duties of the day, resting from business, and engaging in private devotional exercises.

But the house is so noisy, you think you will be better employed in travelling than tarrying. You cannot be. In the one case you are regarding God and his law; in the other, violating it. And which is likely to be the more profitable, under the administration and over-ruling providence of Him who has the hearts of all in his own hands?

If you make the experiment, you may find more quiet and enjoyment in a private chamber or in the solitary woods, than you could have anticipated. God will bless and favor those who conscientiously serve him.

Moreover, these are the very circumstances requiring you to let your light shine, and act decidedly for your Master. Your lot is providentially cas

here for the dav, that your holy example may enlighten and warn the sinners. If you are a pious man, you might even induce them to assemble for prayer, and read to them some solemn tract, which you happen to have along with you, and by this means lead an immortal soul to heaven, and praise God to all eternity that you had resolution enough to obey his law, and keep his Sabbath.

Thus all the excuses of men will fall before a conscientious and fair interpretation of scriptural law. And let not the non-professor imagine himself free from obligation, simply because he does not acknowledge it, or profess to obey the law. On the same principle he might exempt himself from the first, third, sixth, and all the commandments of the moral law.

After this minute examination of the excuses which are offered in justification of one of the common breaches of the Sabbath, it will only be necessary briefly to advert to some other courses of conduct, which plead exemption from the law, but equally fall under its prohibitory clause.

The transportation of merchandise in wagons and canal-boats is certainly *impliedly* forbidden in the words of the law itself, for both require the labor o animals, and *clearly*, in divinely authorized interpretations of it, written in Neh. 13:15.17,18. "In those days I saw in Judah some treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all

manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day: . . . Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath-day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath." And Jeremiah 17:20—22. "Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates. Thus saith the Lord, Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath-day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath-day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers."

And here let me remark, that merchants ought to inquire whether they do not partake in the sin of wagoners, by employing such as drive on Sabbath; whether it would not be their duty to procure such as do not, or even add a small compensation for the delay of one or two days. I believe, however, that the rest of the Sabbath would so much invigorate the team, as to enable them to draw three miles farther a-day, and thus at the end of the week be as far advanced as if they had proceeded uninterruptedly. At least I have known those who proceeded on this plan, and professed that they lost nothing by it.*

* I am happy to learn that the company about to open a line of

Attending on sugar-camps is also a direct infringement on holy time, although some pretend to justify it, especially if the first "fine day" should come on Sabbath. They seem to think it will be sinful to let it waste, as God has bountifully provided it. But God has not bestowed blessings in such a manner as to interfere with the sanctity of his own day. If provision cannot be made on Saturday for receiving the juice which may flow out on the Sabbath, then let it be lost. Our heavenly Father never intended that his goodness should be made an occasion of interfering with the welfare of our souls.

Gathering in a harvest on the Lord's day, in all ordinary cases, is pretty generally considered sinful, yet there are many who justify it in certain extraordinary circumstances. For my own part I know of no instance in which, with my Bible in my hand, I can look upon it as permitted by the law of the Sabbath. God has said, Exod. 34:21, "In earing time and in harvest *thou shalt rest*," and who could rightfully infer, if a pleasant day came on Sabbath after a protracted rain in which grain or hay had been exposed, that this was a permissive grant from heaven to spend the day in securing it in the barn or stack? The following day *may* be wet again, and the harvest lost; and if so, it is to be contemplated

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wagons for *speedy* conveyance of merchandise between Baltimore and Wheeling, have resolved not to employ their teams on the Sabbath. May God prosper them! Professors now have no excuse

as an afflictive dispensation of Providence calling for penitence of soul. But it *may* be clear and fine also, and then the grain and hay will both be improved by remaining out. This also would be the more probable result to conscientious observers of God's law. If, however, the contrary occur, they have the consolation of knowing that their loss can be more than compensated.

I have also always doubted whether iron-masters can justify themselves in keeping their furnaces in blast on the Sabbath. There can be no doubt of the impropriety of setting it on blast on that day; for we are forbidden the "kindling of fires;" all such as are not required for the supply of necessary warmth and food.

And on what principle is it contended that they must be *kept in blast* on the Sabbath? Merely because it would be inconvenient to suspend operations, and would occasion some loss of money, or rather a less rapid accumulation of it. In short, they would not quite so soon, nor realize quite so large a profit. But what merchant might not, on the same principle, open his shop? What farmer might not proceed to gather in all his crop without any cessation on the Sabbath? What wagoner might not justify himself in harnessing and driving? And what government might not defend itself in transporting its mails? And I have thought if furnaces must be in operation on this day, the seventh part of the

profit of each weekly blast, should be sacred to the Lord, as acquired on his day.

But some may now be ready to ask, has not the Saviour modified the strictness of the law, and lowered down the standard of duty in reference to the Sabbath? From his own declaration we should conclude not. I came, he says, not to destroy or subvert the law, the moral law, as is apparent from his specifications, but to ratify or confirm it.

Let us examine his practice. His custom was to go to the synagogue to worship; and in the numerous opportunities afforded him, we never find him announcing either a repeal or modification of the original law. He did indeed strip it of Pharisaical glosses, and assert his capability, as Lord of the Sabbath, of defining its intentions, and understanding its provisions. He felt himself at liberty, under those provisions, to perform works of mercy. He healed the woman afflicted for eighteen years, the man whose hand was withered, and justified men in leading out to water their cattle, in delivering an animal from distress, and his disciples in rubbing a little grain between their hands to satisfy hunger, as they were passing through the field to the synagogue.

The Pharisees, on the occasion of his healing, appealed to the prohibition of the law, as rendering it unlawful. He did not diminish its extent in the least by justifying works of every kind, but inter-

p·ted the law as excepting *labors of mercy or compassion.*

It is thought, however, that the conduct of the disciples in plucking the ears of corn, approved by their Master, in connexion with his declaration that the Sabbath was made for man, is a sufficient indication that its requisitions are relaxed. But if so, it is certainly not very manifest. On what ground were the disciples justified? Was it not because they were then hungry, and their bodies needed sustenance? Look at the context. There is an appeal to the case of David supplying his wants with the shew-bread of the temple, and also to the law of God's kingdom, that he prefers *mercy* to *sacrifice.* But what bearing has this on the subject, if the Saviour were not justifying them as performing an act of mercy called for by their straitened circumstances, and intended to relieve present necessities? And what extensive privileges are contained in the assertion that the Sabbath was made for man? Does it imply that it was given him as a day on which he would be permitted to act out the depravity of his heart, and be set free from all law? Does it mean that he was at liberty on that day to pursue his calling? Then there is no peculiarity about it, and it is no more *made specially* for man than any other day.

But mark the expression. The *Sabbath* was made for man. It was instituted for him as a *Sabbath.* But a Sabbath is a day of rest from secular

employment. The rest of the Sabbath is still therefore obligatory on man, made for his benefit, and allowing of any work which present hunger or affliction demands.

On the Sabbath, then, we may heal the sick, administer to their wants, relieve the distressed, regard the comfort of our animals, and perform any act of compassion which our own or our neighbor's present circumstances may require. Beyond this we may not go on the authority of Christ, or the language of the original law.

But none of the cases of violation specified fall under this rule, and are therefore condemned by the morality of the Bible.

II. The second branch of the subject is comprised in *devotion to religious services.*

These embrace all the *public and private duties of religion.*

The Lord loves the gates of Zion. He delights to have all the people praise him, and lift up their hands in the sanctuary to bless the Lord. And it is comely to appear before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms—to worship and bow down; to kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture. Thus did his people of old open the gates of righteousness, bring an offering, and come into the courts of the Lord's house. Thus they found it sweet to unite in singing the high praises of God, in adoration of his

glorious perfections, and contemplations on his word and works. The apostles and primitive Christians also, esteemed a day in the courts of the Lord better than a thousand On the Sabbath they were wont to be together, with one accord in one place, for the purpose of public worship.

And it becomes those of the present day, who would remember the Sabbath, to imitate their example, and assemble in the different churches with the design of humbling themselves with thankful acknowledgment of his mercies, supplicating his favor, hearing his word, and magnifying his great name, made known in the works of creation and redemption.

The *private duties* of religion, also, must on that day claim a special attention. On other days we are to recognize God in our families, and worship him in the closet; but much of our time is necessarily occupied in the secular business of life. On the Sabbath this is to yield to a more entire devotion to God in the duties of meditation, reading of the Bible and pious works, spiritual conversation, deep searching of heart, and prayer. In all these services the *heart* must be engaged: for God abhors the sacrifice

"Where not the heart is found."

I have thus attempted briefly to interpret the law of the Sabbath, and point out its negative and posi-

tive duties, and shall in conclusion endeavor to impress them on my readers.

And on this subject I cannot refrain from calling upon all ministers of the gospel, all Christians, all parents, all magistrates and office-bearers, and all patriots, to come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

Let ministers of the gospel preach and enlighten the public mind—let Christians walk in the statutes of the Lord blameless, holding back their foot from polluting the Sabbath, and counting it holy and honorable—let parents, by precept and example, inculcate on the minds of children and domestics correct views of the sanctity of the day—let men in office feel the weight of their influence, and exert it wholly in favor of its sanctification—and let patriots evince their patriotism by upholding the institutions of that God who is governor of the nations, and under whose administration righteousness only will exalt, while sin will be the reproach of any people.

We have put forth a united effort, have stemmed the torrent of intemperance, and almost prevailed to roll back its waters of death. But we have another flood of dark and desolating waters heaving its billows over our land; and soon will it have overtopped the highest mountains of our political continent, and left not a spot for the ark of liberty to rest upon, unless some mighty energy be exerted to control its power. The desecration of the Sabbath is a sin for which this land should clothe itself in sackcloth and

ashes, in voluntary and deep humility, lest God strip her utterly of her beautiful garments, and send her out naked and forlorn, to weep over her folly in despising his commandments.

Let me entreat the young, then, and especially the youth of our colleges, to cultivate proper sentiments of respect for the day of God. Let them become advocates of its sanctity, friends of its sacred observance, and resolute champions of its claims to regard as an institution of Jehovah. Thus will they bless themselves, and their country, and be honored as its true benefactors, and brightest ornaments. And when the laurels which encircle the brow of the military chieftain or political aspirant shall have withered away, theirs will still be green and beautiful, and their memory dear to the latest posterity.

And may I not ask the students of Washington College, wherever they go, and whatever stations they fill, to associate with the name of their Alma-Mater, the admirable sentiments of the Father of their country, already quoted, and to secure national morality by the pervasion of religious principle, ever maintain and encourage a strict regard for the Lord's-day, as the only effectual means of diffusing it.

And that you may not want motives derived from the word of God itself, treasure up in your memory some of the promises which God has annexed to an

observance of his holy Sabbath, and some of the denunciations which impend its desecration.

Of the latter, I select for you, Neh. 13:17,18: "Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath-day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath."—Jer. 17:27: "But if you will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath-day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched."—Lev. 26:34,35: "Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbath, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her Sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your Sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it." Of the former, Isa. 56:4—7: "For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant. Even unto them will I give in my house, and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth

the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant. Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar: for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."—Isa. 58:13,14: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a Delight, the Holy of the Lord, Honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—Jer. 17:24,25: "And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath-day, but hallow the Sabbath-day, to do no work therein; Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall remain for ever."

MAY GOD ADD HIS BLESSING! AMEN.

APPENDIX.

Extracts from a Report of a Committee of the British House of Commons on the observance of the Sabbath. Sir ANDREW AGNEW, *Bart., in the Chair.*

Your Committee have approached the subject committed to their investigation, impressed with a deep sense, not only of its importance, but also of the difficulties which are generally supposed to attend it. The weight of the evidence presented to them has, nevertheless, led them to concur in recommending an amendment of the law as both indispensable and practicable. The letter, no less than the spirit of English Legislation, since the Reformation, in relation to the observance of the Lord's-day, has uniformly been directed against all desecrations of it by the exercise of any worldly labor, business, or "ordinary calling," on that day, as will be seen by referring to the abstract of the laws contained in the Appendix: but whilst the tenor of the laws has been favorable to the maintenance of this most important institution of the Christian religion, *the more or less decorous observance of which may be considered, at any given time, to afford the safest test of the greater or less degree of moral and religious feeling pervading the community*, it is much to be deplored that, owing in a great measure to the difficulties attending a due enforcement of its provisions, the absence of adequate penalties, and the defective mode prescribed for recovering them, *but owing still more to the lax spirit of the age, in reference to religious obligation, the law itself is found to be prac*

tically insufficient to secure the objects for which it professes to provide.

Your Committee, however, whilst thus recommending an emendation of the law, as necessary to put down gross desecration of the Lord's-day, and to enable all classes to avail themselves of its privileges, avow that, in anticipating an improved observance of it as the result of more efficient laws, *they rely chiefly on the moral support* which these would receive, as well from the higher authorities of the Church, its Clergy, and Ministers of all denominations, as *from the example of the upper classes, the magistracy, and all respectable heads of families;* and it may be added, from the increasing conviction of all classes, derived from experience, of the value of the Day of Rest to themselves.

In recommending a general revision and amendment of the laws for the observance of the Sabbath, it should be observed, that Sunday labor is generally looked upon as a degradation; *and it appears in evidence, that in each trade, in proportion to its disregard of the Lord's-day, is the immorality of those engaged in it.*

The objects to be attained by the legislation may be considered to be, first, a solemn and decent outward observance of the Lord's-day, as that portion of the week which is set apart by Divine command for public worship; and next, the securing to every member of the community without an exception and however low his station, the uninterrupted enjoyment of that day of rest which has been in mercy provided for him, and the privilege of employing it, as well in the sacred exercises for which it was ordained, as in the bodily relaxation which is neces-

sary for his well-being, and which, though a secondary end, is nevertheless also of high importance.

THE SABBATH IN SCOTLAND.

It appears to be sufficiently established, that for a long period the laws were very strictly administered; and that, in conjunction with the advancement of religious knowledge, the strict observance of the Sabbath proved the means of forming and cherishing those *devout habits to which have been traced the characteristic prudence, industry, and general correctness of morals long prevalent among that people.*

One of the most important circumstances which till lately distinguished the Sabbath in Scotland was, that the entire day was generally regarded as equally sacred. The distinction between "church hours" and the other hours of the day, seems not to have been made, except perhaps in country towns and villages, where, during the interval of public worship, or after the close of the service, refreshments might be obtained by persons coming from a distance to the church. The old laws of Scotland, therefore, apply to the whole of the Sabbath, though it was held to be an aggravation of any offence, that it was committed during the hours of public worship.

Your Committee report with pleasure the assurance given in evidence, that the decorous observance of Sunday has been, and is increasing among the higher classes; nevertheless, they would consider the Report imperfect, did they not express their anxious solicitude that those who are elevated in society should seriously consider how important it is that the Lord's-day should be duly reverenced on

their part, and that they should all evince, by a consistent example, that they are disposed to "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," from respect not only to human enactments, but to the authority of Him by whom the day has been set apart for the wisest and most beneficial purposes. Such conduct must eminently conduce, as it has ever done, not only to their own highest interests, as affording them a day of rest and retirement, but to the welfare of their families and dependants; thus transmitting their good example through all the various grades of society, and thereby strengthening the hands of the magistracy in their efforts to uphold the laws.

It will be seen strongly stated in evidence, that innumerable unhappy individuals, who have forfeited their lives to the offended laws of their country, have confessed that their career in vice commenced with Sabbath breaking, and neglect of religious ordinances.

Your Committee feel assured that an increase of true religion must also follow an amendment of the laws, inasmuch as many persons thus favored with an entire day of rest, would be led to employ it for religious purposes; and that a great accession would accrue to the strength and prosperity of the State itself, arising out of the improved tone of morals which a due observance of the Sabbath day invariably produces. And there are, moreover, abundant grounds both in the Word of God and in the history of past ages, to expect that his blessing and favor would accompany such an endeavor to promote the honor due to His holy Name and commandment.

Extracts from the Testimony of Dr. Faree, a Physician of great eminence, and of forty years' study and practice.

I have been in the habit during a great many years of considering the *uses* of the Sabbath, and of observing its *abuses*. The abuses are chiefly manifested in labor and dissipation. The use, medically speaking, is that of a day of *rest*. In a theological sense, it is a *holy* rest, providing for the introduction of new and sublimer ideas into the mind of man, preparing him for his future state. As a day of rest, I view it as a day of compensation for the inadequate restorative power of the body under *continued* labor and excitement. A physician always has respect to the preservation of the restorative power, because if once this be lost, his healing office is at an end. If I show you, from the physiological view of the question, that there are provisions in the laws of nature which correspond with the Divine commandment, you will see from the analogy, that "the Sabbath was made for man," as a necessary appointment. A physician is anxious to preserve the balance of circulation, as necessary to the restorative power of the body. The ordinary exertions of man *run down* the circulation every day of his life; and the first general law of nature by which God (who is not only the giver, but also the preserver and sustainer of life) prevents man from destroying himself, is the alternating of day with night, that repose may succeed action. But although the night apparently equalizes the circulation well, yet it does not sufficiently restore its balance for the attainment of a *long* life. Hence one day in seven, by the bounty of Providence, is thrown in as a day of compensation, to perfect by its repose the animal system. You may easily de-

termine this question as a matter of fact by trying it on beasts of burden. Take that fine animal, the horse, and work him to the full extent of his powers every day in the week, or give him rest one day in seven, and you will soon perceive, by the superior vigor with which he performs his functions on the other six days, that this rest is necessary to his well-being. Man, possessing a superior nature, is borne along by the very vigor of his mind, so that the injury of *continued* diurnal exertion and excitement on his animal system is not so immediately apparent as in the brute; but in the long run he breaks down more suddenly: it abridges the length of his life and that vigor of his old age, which (as to mere animal power) ought to be the object of his preservation. I consider therefore that, in the beautiful provision of Providence for the preservation of human life, the sabbatical appointment is not, as it has been sometimes theologically viewed, simply a precept partaking of the nature of a political institution, but that it is to be numbered amongst the natural duties, if the preservation of life be admitted to be a duty, and the premature destruction of it a suicidal act. This is said simply as a physician, and without reference at all to the theological question; but if you consider further the effect of real Christianity, namely, peace of mind, confiding trust in God, and good-will to man, you will perceive in this source of renewed vigor to the mind, and through the mind to the body, an additional spring of life imparted from this higher use of the Sabbath as a holy rest. Were I to pursue this part of the question I should be touching on the duties committed to the clergy; but this I will say, that researches in physiology, by the analogy of the working of Provi

dence in nature, will establish the truth of revelation, and consequently show that the Divine commandment is not to be considered as an arbitrary enactment, but as an appointment necessary to man. This is the position in which I would place it, as contradistinguished from precept and legislation; I would point out the sabbatical rest as necessary to man, and that the great enemies of the Sabbath, and consequently the enemies of man, are all laborious exercises of the body or mind, and dissipation, which force the circulation on that day in which it should repose; which relaxation from the ordinary cares of life, the enjoyment of this repose in the bosom of one's family, with the religious studies and duties which the day enjoins, not one of which, if rightly exercised, tends to abridge life, constitute the beneficial and appropriate services of the day. The student of nature, in becoming the student of Christ, will find in the principles of his doctrine and law, and in the practical application of them, the only and perfect science which prolongs the present, and perfects the future life.

In your own practice have you thought it necessary to carry on the whole of your occupation on a Sunday as on the other six days of the week?—Certainly not.

Do you think your patients have suffered thereby?—Certainly not.

Of course in extreme cases you do?—I consider that the two officers of healing, so to speak, are the clergyman and the medical man; they are the only two classes of persons called on to labor on that day for the benefit of the community. I have found it essential to my own well-being to abridge my labor on the Sabbath to what is actually necessary. I

have frequently observed the premature death of medical men from *continued* exertion. In warm climates and in active service, this is painfully apparent.

As a seventh day is absolutely necessary for the rest of man, what do you say to the habits of clergymen, who must of necessity labor on the seventh day?—I have advised the clergyman, in lieu of his Sabbath, to rest one day in the week; it forms a continual prescription of mine. I have seen many destroyed by their duties on that day, and, to preserve others, I have frequently suspended them for a season from the discharge of those duties.

So that the clergyman furnishes an illustration of your own principle as to the ill effects of working on the seventh day continually?—Yes, certainly: I would say further, that quitting the grosser evils of mere animal living from over-stimulation and undue exercise of body, the working of the mind in one continued train of thought is destructive of life in he most distinguished class of society, and that senators themselves stand in need of reform in that particular. I have observed many of them destroyed by neglecting this economy of life.

Therefore, to all men of whatever class, who must necessarily be occupied six days in the week, you recommend them to abstain on the seventh, and in the course of life they would gain by it?—Assuredly they would, by giving to their bodies the repose, and to their minds the change of ideas suited to the day, for which it was appointed by unerring wisdom.

And in fact more mental work would be accomplished in their lives?—Certainly, by the increased vigor imparted.

A human being is so constituted that he needs a day of rest both from mental and bodily labor?—Certainly. You have drawn the inference from the tenor of my evidence and argument, which I wish to leave on the mind of the Legislative body.

Extracts from the Testimony of the Rev. John Lee, D. D.

It may not perhaps be improper to state, that during the earliest times of the Church of Scotland, after the Reformation, the Sabbath was not observed with the same strictness that it was at a period somewhat later. It is very commonly believed, that at the Reformation in Scotland, the leading individuals proceeded in general to an extreme as opposite as possible to the practices of the Church which had previously existed, and became righteous overmuch. I find this was by no means the case; in reality, the change was so gradual, and in some respects so imperfect, that at so late a period as the year 1574, about three years after the death of Knox, the practice of performing comedies on the Sabbath had not been altogether discontinued, and it was occasionally allowed to proceed, under the countenance and approbation of some of those Church Courts that might have been expected to be the most rigid in refusing to allow any encroachment on the sanctity of the Lord's day. (Here Dr. Lee referred to one instance from a record of the kirk session of St. Andrews.)

Have you reason to believe that those comedies acted upon the Lord's day were accompanied with the usual profligacy and desecration of sacred things which is generally characteristic of them?—I have no reason to think so with regard to this comedy; on the contrary, I believe it was intended to be a

very sober kind of pastime, approaching somewha to a religious observance; probably it was expected to be edifying to the people.

Are you in possession of any evidence that would guide the Committee to a history of the transition from the old to the new practice in Scotland, in reference to the Sabbath?—I beg leave to produce to the Committee extracts from the books of several kirk-sessions, for the purpose of showing in what manner the laws against Sabbath-breaking were administered by those Church Courts; it is needless to enter into any farther detail. (The witness delivered in the same, which were read. They show that the regulations for the observance of the Sabbath were very strict, and very strictly observed.)

Will you go on to state what effect those regulations produced when they were thus strictly and faithfully acted upon?—I have reason to believe that the effect produced was highly salutary; but without entering into detail, I shall feel obliged to the Committee to be allowed to produce an extract from Kirkton's History, which is understood to be a very authentic memorial of the time, as showing what was the state of public morals when those rules were most strictly observed.)

The following is the extract:

"Now, before we speak of the alteration court influences made upon the church of Scotland, let us consider in what case it was at this time. There be in all Scotland some 900 paroches, divided into 68 presbytries, which are again cantoned into 14 synods, out of which, by a solemn legation of commissioners from every presbytrie, they used yearly to constitute a national assembly. At the King's return (in 1660) every paroche hade a minister

every village hade a schoole, every family almost hade a Bible, yea, in most of the countrey, all the children of age could read the Scriptures and were provided of Bibles, either by the parents or the ministers. I have lived many years in a paroche where I never heard ane oath, and you might have ridde many miles before you hade heard any; also, you could not for a great part of the countrey have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped by reading, singing, and publick prayer. Nobody complained more of our church government than our taverners, whose ordinary lamentation was, their trade was broke, people were become so sober."

To this description, which I have ground for believing is chiefly applicable to the south and west of Scotland, with which the writer was best acquainted, I may take occasion to add, that I have great reason to think that the Sabbath was observed with the greatest strictness and solemnity in Scotland soon after the period of the Revolution of 1688, till about the year 1730.

Have you reason to think that was the period at which the Sabbath was best observed?—Yes.

To what cause would you ascribe that marked and visible change?—To the very great vigilance, faithfulness, and zeal with which both ministers and elders performed their duty towards those who were placed under their charge, and more perhaps than to any other cause, to the universal practice of Bible education.

At that period the system of parochial education had become general, had it not?—It was legalized about the year 1693; but though in the Lowlands it had been almost universally prevalent before the middle of the 17th century, I cannot venture to say

that it became general, in those parts of the country that required it most, till after the middle of the 18th century. In the 1758, there were 175 parishes in the Highlands in which parochial schools had never been erected.

Then do you collect, from your acquaintance with the history of that period, that there was a marked difference between those parts of the country which had come under the operation of scriptural education, and those parts of the country to which it had not been extended, in reference to the observance of the Sabbath?—There is the strongest evidence that there was a marked distinction between the two: for the government of Charles II. could find no such fit instruments of the severities exercised on the Presbyterians in the west, as the Highlanders, whose principles and manners appeared to be altogether different. With such horror were these atrocities long remembered in Ayrshire, that for more than fifty years after the revolution in 1688, it is said that a Jacobite or a Roman Catholic was not there to be found; and it is ascertained, that in that large county not so much as one man could be induced to follow the misfortunes of the house of Stuart, in the year 1745. It is also recorded, in reports almost annually transmitted to the General Assembly, that in several parts of the Highlands the population was long in a state of almost entire heathenism.

Up to what period?—I may almost say till after the year 1745; but certainly till after the accession of George I.

Has there been any favorable change in the general religious condition of the Highlands of Scotland since the year 1730, more especially with relation to the observance of the Lord's day?—I

have reason to think that there has been a favorable change, which indeed had commenced some years before that period.

To what do you ascribe this favorable change?—I ascribe it partly to the exertions of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, which was founded about the year 1709, and which by establishing schools for teaching to read, especially the Holy Scriptures, in the more necessitous districts of the Highlands, has proved the means of greatly increasing the religious knowledge of the people, and consequently of increasing the reverence for the Lord's-day, and for other Divine institutions.

Are you disposed to identify the general improvement of the country, religiously and morally speaking, with the general diffusion of scriptural education?—Most certainly; I think there is the strongest evidence upon that subject, evidence that cannot possibly be controverted; it is found in a document still extant and in print, namely, the dedication of the first Scottish edition of the Bible to James the Sixth, which edition was printed in the year 1579, exactly twenty years after the Reformation, in which it is expressly stated, that so great had been the progress of religious instruction, particularly in that form, in a country where less than forty years before, the Bible was not suffered to be read, that almost every house possessed a copy of the Bible, and had the Bible read in it. It is ascertained also, that in the time of the Covenanters, which I believe to have been a period of great religious light, and of great strictness and purity of morals, there was scarcely an individual in the Lowlands of Scotland who could not read, and who was not in the habit of

reading the Bible, and scarcely a family in which the worship of God was not regularly performed, both by celebrating the praises of God, reading the Scriptures, and prayer. Such a description could not possibly apply to the Highlands; at that period there was no such thing as a translation of the Bible into the native language of the Highlands. A considerable supply of Gaelic or Irish Bibles was furnished to them in the year 1690, at the expense of the Hon. Robert Boyle; soon afterwards the Book of Psalms, the Catechism, and the Confession of Faith, were published in Gaelic; but there was no edition even of the New Testament fit for being used in schools, or indeed for any purpose, till 1767, and from that period a great improvement may be dated. After the Revolution, I find from the accounts of the schools in towns and Lowland parishes, some of which I have in my possession, that in the periodical examinations which took place, there are regular returns of the numbers of the children who were reading different books, some of them the New Testament, but the greater part reading the entire Bible, and that was the period certainly when the Sabbath was most strictly observed, and when, according to all the accounts that can be best relied upon, the morals of the people were likewise the most healthy.

Then according to the opinion which you have expressed, it would seem that you ascribe the grounding of the principles of the Reformation in the mind of the Scottish population to the general diffusion of the Scriptures, and the extension of Scriptural schools?—Certainly, to that cause, in combination with the faithful preaching of the Word.

Do you conceive that the disposition to sanctify

the Sabbath bears a proportion to the religious instruction of a people?—Surely; indeed, I never can conceive the Sabbath to be conscientiously observed, observed from principle, unless the practice is founded in the knowledge of the doctrines of religion, and the recognition of the Divine authority of the Old and New Testament.

Can you say from your knowledge of history, whether the description given by a CELEBRATED NOVELIST* of the period of the COVENANTERS is historically correct, and whether their precise manners were as strongly marked in contrast to the other party as that ingenious writer would have us to suppose?—Most certainly that description is not historically correct; there never was such gloom attending the observance of the Sabbath in Scotland as that celebrated writer alleges. The Sabbath, though observed with the greatest reverence, was a day rather of sober and cheerful piety than of any painful restraint. It may be, as the question has been asked, not improper to state, that the greater part of the description applying to the religion and morals of that class of persons in Scotland who are known by the name of Covenanters, must have been supplied almost altogether by the imagination of the writer. He seems equally to have forgotten the state of things before the Restoration of Charles II., and the state of things which supervened upon that event, which was certainly hailed as joyfully by the Presbyterians of Scotland as by any other class of His Majesty's subjects, although they had great cause afterwards to complain of the harsh treatment which they experienced, in violation of the solemn

* Sir Walter Scott.

promises which that monarch had repeatedly made to them. But on that subject, as I believe the authority of the celebrated writer referred to is often thought almost the best that can be quoted, I think it right to state that he seems to have been utterly unacquainted both with the observances of the Presbyterian Church, and those of the Episcopalian church which succeeded it. He imagines, for instance, that the Liturgy was observed after the Restoration of Charles II., whereas, in point of fact, the only change that took place in the worship in the churches consisted in the discontinuance of the Directory and the adoption of three Articles, which had been thought offensive in the days of Knox, namely, the use of the Lord's Prayer, the repetition of the Creed by parents when they brought their children to be baptized, and the use of a doxology in connexion with the singing of psalms. These were the only marked deviations from the worship which had been previously observed; and the whole objection of the people of Scotland arose from their belief that the hierarchy and His Majesty's claim of supremacy in matters ecclesiastical were not divinely warranted, and that the power of the Church, patronized by the King, had been exercised formerly, and they were afraid would still continue to be exercised, in a manner inconsistent with the full enjoyment of their religious privileges. I refer to these particulars merely as specimens of the inaccuracy of the descriptions which have probably made an impression not easily effaced, though it has done great injustice to the characters of an oppressed and persecuted race, who, derided as they have been as feeble-minded fanatics, did more than any other body of men both to maintain the interests of reli

gion, and to secure for their posterity the enjoyment of civil liberty.

But, in point of fact, there was neither in the form of worship on the Lord's-day, nor in the general tone of the preaching, that marked difference which that same author would have us to suppose is so strong?—There was a difference, but not such as he represents.

In point of fact, to the one party has been attributed the manners and feelings of the nineteenth century, while, with regard to the other party, the manners and habits of the seventeenth century are characterized?—Surely; but at the same time it is right to observe, that there was a very marked and glaring distinction between the character of the ministers of the one denomination and of the other, at the period referred to; and in my comprehension, the description given by Bishop Burnet, who could scarcely be suspected of undue partiality to Presbyterians, is in some respects one of the most candid which is to be found. The strictest Presbyterian, in his anxiety to defend the outraged and insulted character of his forefathers, may almost be content to refer to such an honest chronicler as Burnet. He owns, that the Presbyterian ministers who were turned out of their livings in 1662, were grave, solemn, diligent, and faithful, whereas the new incumbents put in the places of the ejected preachers were generally very mean and despicable, the worst preachers he ever heard, ignorant to a reproach, many of them openly vicious, a disgrace to their order, and to the sacred functions, and indeed the dreg and refuse of the northern parts.

The effect produced by legislation upon the moral and religious habits of the people of the Lowlands

of Scotland has been stated by you up to the year of 1730; will you be so good as to continue your statement with reference to later periods?—I am not able to ascertain that some of the practices to which I have referred, particularly those of searching the more populous districts of the parishes, in towns especially, during the time of Divine service, and calling the absentees to account for their neglect of religious duty, and for their profanation of the Sab bath, continued later than the year 1730: I hav been able to trace it down only to that period.

Do you know when the Sabbath ceased to be observed with the same strictness and solemnity by which it had been so long distinguished in Scotland? —I have reason to think that a very considerable change for the worse, took place more than forty years ago. I have not the same certain sources of information with regard to the period which intervened between the years 1730 and 1780.

But from the period of more than forty years ago, is it your opinion that there has been a gradual falling off in the observance of that day?—Yes, I think so, from many conversations which I have had with most intelligent persons, both those who are ministers of the Church, and other pious individuals throughout the country; and I perceive, in a curious paper published by the late Mr. Creech, an eminent bookseller, and at one time chief magistrate of Edinburgh (which may be seen in the Statistical Account of Scotland,) that in Edinburgh particularly, the defection was very strongly marked about the year 1783. Mr. Creech contrasts the religious and moral character of the towns-people in 1763 with that of 1783, in the following terms:—

"In 1763, it was fashionable to go to church, and

people were interested about religion. Sunday was strictly observed by all ranks as a day of devotion, and it was disgraceful to be seen in the streets during the time of public worship. Families attended church with their children and servants, and family worship was frequent. In 1783, attendance on church was greatly neglected, especially by the men; Sunday was by many made a day of relaxation, and young people were allowed to stroll about at all hours. Families thought it ungenteel to take their domestics to church with them. The streets were far from being void of people in the time of public worship, and in the evenings were frequently loose and riotous, particularly owing to bands of apprentice boys and young lads. Family worship was almost disused. In no respect were the manners of 1763 and 1783 more remarkable, than in the decency, dignity, and delicacy of the one period, compared with the looseness, dissipation, and licentiousness of the other. Many people ceased to blush at what would formerly have been reproved as a crime.

"In 1763, masters took charge of their apprentices, and kept them under their eye in their own houses. In 1783, few masters would receive apprentices to stay in their houses; and yet from them an important part of succeeding society is to be formed: if they attended their hours of business, masters took no further charge. The rest of the time might be passed (as too frequently happens) in vice and debauchery; hence they become idle, insolent, and dishonest. In 1791, the practice had become still more prevalent. Reformation of manners, to be general or effectual, must begin in families.

"In 1763, the clergy visited, catechised, and instructed the families within their respective parishes, in the principles of morality, Christianity, and the relative duties of life. In 1783, visiting and catechising were disused (except by a very few,) and since continue to be so; nor perhaps would the clergy now be received with welcome on such an occasion.

"In 1763, the question respecting the morality of stage-plays was much agitated. By those who attended the theatre even without scruple, Saturday night was thought the most improper in the week for going to the play. In 1783, the morality of stage-plays, or their effects on society, were not thought of. The practice of taking a box for the Saturday night through the season, was much practised by boarding-mistresses, so that there could be no choice of the play, but the young ladies could only take what was set before them by the manager. The galleries never failed to applaud what they formerly would have hissed, as improper in sentiment or decorum.

"In 1763, hair-dressers were few, and hardly permitted to dress hair on Sundays, and many of them voluntarily declined it. In 1783, hair-dressers were more than trebled in number, and their busiest day was Sunday.

"In 1763, the revenue arising from the distillery in Scotland amounted to 4,739*l.* In 1783, to 192,000*l.*

"In no respect was the sobriety and decorum of the lower ranks in 1763 more remarkable, than by contrasting them with the riot and licentiousness of 1783, particularly on Sundays and holidays."

As a proof that the profanation of the Sabbath

nad been increasing in Scotland before the year 1794, it may be mentioned that the General Assembly of that year thought it necessary to publish an admonition on the subject; and in 1795 the General Assembly evidently entertained an opinion that some new legislative enactment had become necessary; for the records bear, that "the Assembly instructed the procurator to watch the introduction of any Bill respecting the due observation of the Lord's day; to correspond with the introducer of such Bill; to transmit to him a copy of the admonition and information on the subject, published by authority of the last Assembly; and to request his particular attention to the state of Scotland respecting that subject."

Can you assign the causes which appear to have been instrumental in producing this change?—I think that one of the causes to which I may refer, is that which has been recently adverted to, namely, the relaxation of the discipline of the church. Another cause I conceive to have been the progressive decline of Scriptural instruction throughout the schools in Scotland. I think another cause must have been the increased communication with England and Ireland, and the gradual introduction of new habits in consequence of that more frequent intercourse. Another powerful cause I conceive to have been the influence of infidel publications, and the substitution of frivolous reading, for the grave and improving instruction conveyed in the writings of the popular divines, with which the peasantry of Scotland, as well as the mechanics in towns, had previously been very familiar. Another source of this change I conceive to have been the ensnaring of men of rank and official station. I beg also to mention, in some cases, probably, though I trust not

generally, the decreasing attention to the practice of parochial visitation by the ministers of parishes. But on this head I must observe, that this decreasing attention must not always be considered as having been the fault of the ministers. It was found that persons of higher station, in many districts of the country, were often of a different creed from the established church, and therefore they were not so accessible to the ministers as their predecessors had generally been in former times; at the same time many of the laboring classes in populous districts had seceded from the church, not only in consequence of dissatisfaction with the ministrations of the established clergy, or in consequence of a conviction that the church had degenerated, but very much because they had not sufficient accommodation in the parish churches, a circumstance to which I shall advert under another head. When so great a proportion both of the higher and of the lower ranks, ceased to be members of the establishment, it is natural to suppose that the visits of the ministers, though not altogether discontinued, would be less efficacious. I may add, that at about the period to which I refer, a great change took place in the distribution of the population of Scotland, partly in consequence of the enlargement of farms, and partly from the introduction of machinery both in the operations of agriculture and the other arts. In connexion with this, I beg to advert to the neglect, as I must consider it, of the government of the country, to provide sufficient accommodation in churches for the rapidly increasing population, and also to provide adequately for the education of the poor. I may also take notice of a circumstance which must have materially affected the observance of the Sabbath,

namely, the close confinement and severe labor of persons (both children and adults) employed in manufactories during the week, tempting them to seek for relaxation on the Lord's day. I think I may also add, as one of the occasions of Sabbath profanation, the turn for political discussion among all classes of people, which was introduced during the American war, and still more at the time of the French revolution, and which abstracted the minds even of some of the most sober, quiet, and peaceable of the population from those more momentous subjects which had previously occupied a greater share of their attention. I think another very powerful cause of the lamentable change that took place, was the influence of military habits during the war which began in 1793, particularly during the early period of that war. Towns and villages were generally crowded with troops; there was much consequent depravity among their juvenile companions, both male and female; Sunday evening parades were almost universal, wherever troops were stationed; there were performances of martial music on the evening of the Lord's day, attracting great crowds of people from their houses; this was often followed by adjournment to taverns, or to equally ensnaring rural walks under the cloud of night; and to the associations that were thus formed, I believe many may date the corruption of their principles and habits; and the general tendency of the circumstances to which I have now alluded, was greatly to familiarize the people of Scotland to a mode of observing the Sabbath altogether different from that to which they had been accustomed in earlier times. As another source of the change to which I have referred, I may state what must already be unde:

the view of the committee, the facilities of travelling consequent on the improvement of roads, the multiplication of public conveyances, the frequency of communication by post, and, at a later period, the introduction of steam navigation. With regard to stage-coaches, it may be right to notice that the practice of travelling in stage-coaches in Scotland on the Lord's day (with the exception of the mail,) has hitherto prevailed to a very limited extent, but I observe it creeping in Edinburgh in a form which I rather apprehend may prevent that check being imposed on it, which in other circumstances would probably be thought necessary. I find, that among the inhabitants of the town, whose families in summer resort to villages and small towns in the neighborhood, for sea-bathing or other purposes, a number are in the habit of coming to Edinburgh on the morning of the Sabbath in stage-coaches. As the object of travelling on those occasions appears to be a good one, I suspect that it may in this way be allowed gradually and almost insensibly to be introduced to a much greater extent than it would otherwise have been.

I may also take notice of the great change which is taking place in the mode of living in Scotland, particularly among people in business, who formerly were in the habit of taking their servants and apprentices to church along with them, and also of exercising a strict inspection over their conduct catechising and otherwise instructing them in the evenings of the Sabbath, but who now too often allow them to wander as they will. A very great evil has been experienced in Edinburgh, and I believe in many other large towns, in consequence of the liberty of visiting and walking, which is almost uni-

versally allowed to servants on Sundays, by their masters and mistresses, who do not seem to recollect that that is a day which God has appropriated to himself, and which is not at the disposal of any human being. I might here notice, as a cause of Sabbath profanation, the great multiplication of public houses, and the facility of gratifying intemperate propensities in consequence of the lowering of the duty on spirits. But I have no doubt these circumstances must be fully under the view of the committee. The only other particular which I shall mention as a cause of the profanation of the Sabbath, is the great increase of newspaper and other periodical publications, which are sometimes printed on the Sunday, and which are very generally read by various classes of people on that day, so as to withdraw them from those religious exercises which are the proper occupation of the Christian Sabbath, as well as constituents of the purest enjoyment.

Is it a fact that any periodicals are printed and published in Edinburgh on the Sunday?—The fact is, that there are no periodicals published of any class in Edinburgh on the Sunday, so far as I know, but some of the newspapers which are published on Monday morning, are printed on the Sunday, or at least occasionally in a great measure printed on that day. I shall state two facts which came to my knowledge very recently, as illustrative of that subject. About nine months ago, a person who regularly attends my church, applied to me for the baptism of his child. Having reason to believe that the man was of a good character, and regular in the discharge of all the private duties of life, I could have no objection to administer the ordinance, except one, and it was this, that he was not a communicant. I asked

him how it was that he lived in the neglect of that religious duty; he stated to me that he had the strongest impression of the divine obligation of every professing Christian to keep up the remembrance of the death of Christ in that solemn ordinance, but he felt that from the mode of life which he pursued, he was in his own apprehension not warranted to avail himself of that privilege. Asking him what he meant, I was told, that being a printer, he was habitually required to work on the Lord's day; though he felt the greatest scruple of conscience, he had never ventured to give up his employment, and on that account alone he declined to become a communicant. On making further inquiry, I found that a very considerable number of persons are employed in that way almost every Lord's day, not during the whole day, but beginning soon after divine service is over in the evening, about five or six o'clock; thus being altogether abstracted from the charge and inspection of a young family, and thus being also tempted to spend a part of that day in sleep, which otherwise they would be disposed to spend in attendance upon their religious duties. The effect of it upon many, must be to withdraw them altogether from attendance upon divine ordinances. I beg just to state another case, which shows that the evil has gone as far north as Inverness. Within these last three weeks, as being a member of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, I was applied to by a man to be examined, with a view to an appointment as a teacher under that society. I asked whether he had been accustomed to teach; he told me no, he had been a printer, but he could not continue in the employment in which he had been engaged for the last ten years nearly, because

he was now required either to work on the Lord's day, or else to give up his employment; and this person was employed on a newspaper which is printed only weekly, on the Tuesday.

Is it not your opinion, then, that the publication of periodicals on the Monday morning, tends greatly to the breach of the Sabbath in Edinburgh?—They tend, I think, in a considerable degree.

Can you give any information in regard to the practice of delivering letters and papers at the general Post-office in Edinburgh on the Sabbath-day?—It is not carried, by any means, to a great extent in Edinburgh: the time is very limited; I think there are two hours in the day at which persons may have letters by calling for them, but I scarcely think there is any town in Scotland where there is less of the delivery of letters on the Sabbath than there is in Edinburgh.

Have you any remarks to make upon newspapers, or periodicals that are usually read on the Sunday?—The injurious effect of the practice must be so obvious, that I scarcely think it necessary to make any remark, except this, that I have observed of late that some publications have been introduced with a view of obviating the evils arising from that kind of reading, and I am rather apprehensive that some of the very papers which have been intended to counteract the evil, may prove a cause of extending it, for I observe one paper in particular which set out professedly as a paper calculated to convey religious instruction, which, on examination, I perceive consists now, whatever it might have done at first, chiefly of extracts from books which are the very reverse of religious.

It being well known that there is no Sunday de-

livery of letters at all events in London, might not the same practice be observed at the post-offices in Scotland, without consequences injurious to the community?—Most certainly; and I think it most desirable that there should be no such thing. But I may state, as this question has been asked, that in many of the towns in Scotland the letters are distributed on the Sunday; I mean they are carried about in the same manner as they are on other days; and, indeed, in many places of the country, they are much more delivered on that day than on any other; for people living at a distance from post towns, when they go to church, avail themselves of that opportunity of getting probably all the letters that have been sent for them during the week. Not having anticipated any inquiries on this subject, I cannot be very exact in point of dates; but in looking lately at the Acts of the General Assembly, about the year 1759, I noticed that there had been strong remonstrances against the travelling of the post in Scotland, when it was first introduced; and I have also learnt from some of the magazines, that petitions against that innovation were sent to government from many places, and particularly from Glasgow, the greatest commercial town in Scotland. This was perhaps one of the first modes in which government, during the last century, not only countenanced, but to a certain extent enjoined, the violation of the rest of the Sabbath in Scotland.

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Do you, by the decline of Scriptural education, allude to the departure from the old Scottish system of making the Bible the first school-book?—I allude to the partial cessation of the practice of making the

Bible one of the books always read in the schools for the common branches of education.

You are aware that in the poorer part of the country, or among the poorer members of a school, if there was no other book, the children had at least the Bible even to learn to spell upon?—That does not come within my knowledge; I am not aware of any part of the country in which no other book is used than the Bible; but I know that the common practice formerly was to begin to learn to read in the Shorter Catechism, then the Book of Proverbs, then the New Testament, and lastly the whole Bible. I never knew any children learn to read more rapidly than in that way. I was so taught myself. This method has many advantages. Children, instead of wasting their time in spelling unmeaning syllables, can from the first, attach a signification to every sound. The sound is from the first moment a vehicle of important truth. Good principles are thus associated with the very dawn of tuition. With children who are thus taught, reading is not merely the preparation for acquiring future instruction through the medium of letters, it is all along the direct means of communicating sound and saving instruction, without any alloy of error. I hope I shall not be accused of wandering from the question, if I take this opportunity of remarking, that what has often been called the *mother wit* of the people of Scotland, had its origin in the practice of reading the Proverbs of Solomon, which formerly might well be called by every child in the Lowlands, "the law of his mother," for the mother was for the most part the instructress, and it was quite practicable for the mother to superintend this part of her children's education, without suspending the ordinary occupations of do-

mestic industry: she could sew or knit, and at the same time hear her children read, without almost any risk of suffering a mistake to pass unnoticed, because the only books employed, the Old and New Testaments, were those with which her familiarity had been daily increasing, in consequence of the constant practice of reading a chapter morning and evening in family worship. It was equally impossible for her to suffer any blunder, in reading the Shorter Catechism, to pass undetected and unchallenged: this was the first book; and though it is often alleged to be unintelligible to children, I know well from experience and long observation, that it is not unprofitable to have it indelibly imprinted on the memory. I have great satisfaction in remembering that the first lesson which I learnt was not a series of insignificant, syllables or a string of idle words, but this great and fundamental principle, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever." And the second was not less important: "The word of God, contained in the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him." I do not know how mere prudential maxims, or rules of morality, can be satisfactorily and securely established, otherwise than on the basis of Scripture; but I hold it to be the first duty of every man who believes in divine revelation, to impress on all his fellow-creatures the momentous principle which I have just recited, and which I think sufficiently intelligible by a little child, that all the worth and happiness attainable in time, and all the hopes of eternal life, are gained by the knowledge and belief of the Word of God.

THE END.

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